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HALFORD E. LUCCOCK



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FARES, PLEASE!

AND OTHER ESSAYS ON PRACTICAL THEMES

BY
HALFORD E. LUCCOCK



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FOREWORD

It is a happy book whose chapters live and work together as a family of blood relatives.

This little volume cannot aspire to such felicity. Its covers open on an orphan asylum rather than a family. Like the inmates of an Orphans' Home, its chapters are many and are all small; they are dressed in but the plainest workaday gingham and calico; they are all waifs—picked up on widely scattered lanes of observation.

Yet for a' that, they are not entirely unrelated. They are on speaking terms with one another, and try, at least, to speak a common language of faith and hope. They all believe that life is an affair of great zest and great prizes, and they share together the conviction of Arthur Hugh Clough that "Life loves no lookers on at his great game."

The essays are offered simply in the hope that they may prove suggestive starting points for thought.

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New Haven, Connecticut.

I

FARES, PLEASE!

THE smile on the face of the conductor of the 7:29 to the city every morning is a real event in the daily life of scores of commuters. His genial "Good morning" goes to make up for the lack of sunshine on cloudy days. Yet all the passengers know that behind the warmth of the smile and the unfeigned cordiality of the greeting is the stern insistence of "Fares, please, gentlemen!" For the 7:29 every day is not a charity outing; it is a pay-as-you-go enterprise.

The world greets its children with a smile and a sunny "Good morning," and some are so entranced with the smile and the "bloom o' the world" that they fail to notice with any clearness the iron demand, "Fares, please!" A recent astronomer has waxed enthusiastic over the glorious free ride nature gives us in the swing of the planet, hurtling through billions of miles of azure sky and tinted cloud at the rate of so many miles a minute. He calls it the

grandest roller coaster in the universe. He is right when he calls it glorious. He is wrong when he calls it free.

To some people the art of life largely consists in evading the fare. Paul's noble thought, "I am debtor," is still Greek to them. H. G. Wells says truly that people can go through life "fudging and evading and side-stepping, till their first contact with elemental realities is the cold sweat of their deathbed."

Some Steal a Ride. They evade the fare by "riding the bumpers." They go through life as "blind baggage." The world has made an investment in them to the extent of thousands of dollars for sustenance. The State has invested thousands more, to say nothing of life and blood, in their education. For this they make no return in benefits conferred. On the lowest rung of the social ladder they are called tramps. Higher up they are often called clever.

Some Ride on a Pass. This pass is handed to them by others, usually ancestors, in the shape of money, position, or talent. Some one else pays their way, and they accept it complacently as the proper thing. No sense of debt goes with it. Fortunately, such a free

trip in a Pullman is no longer regarded as so praiseworthy an achievement as it once was. The inheritance tax, the income tax, the corporation tax, each is a loud stentorian, "Fares, please!"

Some Ride on a Child's Ticket. They pay half fare. To the world's demand for a strong man's stint of work and service they pleadingly insist that they are only twelve years old and must be let off with giving to the world a half portion as their share. They do not ask to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease; all they ask is to be allowed to go in a perambulator.

Some Pay. These are the ones who make the world morally solvent. They take no delight in dodging. Their lives are lifted out of triviality and insignificance by the ennobling power of a great obligation. They do not attempt to discharge their debt by merely becoming effective economic producers, for the world is more than a granary, a machine shop, a storehouse of commodities. It is a moral enterprise, the scene of the kingdom of God, a progressive advance in spiritual welfare. Its capital and stock in trade is not reckoned in pig iron and corn, but in moral purposes and

spiritual ideals. For these they are debtor in honor bound to add to the world's spiritual resources.

How do the debits and credits lie with us? There is in a Middle Western city a keen business man of high probity, one of the largest factors in its commercial life. He does not realize that the qualities that have won him success, the aggressive will, the alert mind, even his honesty, are the unearned increment and free gift of six generations of God-fearing New England ancestry. He prattles in a half-witted manner about being a self-made man. For the church and the welfare movements of his city he has no time. In plain language, he is stealing a ride through life without paying his fare. Here is another man in whose life the Sunday school has played an immeasurable part. It helped to shape an impressionable boy into a responsible and upright man. In that institution he now takes only the most nominal interest. He cheerfully leaves the real work to be done by others whose youth and inexperience are only partly made up for by their zeal and devotion. He is trying to ride on a half-fare ticket. What shall we say of the multitude who owe the peace and purity

of their homes, the whole core of their life's happiness and security, to the gospel and the church, and who think to cancel the obligation by a few patronizing words?

What an irresistible force the church would have did it not have to carry so many who merely ride and do nothing else! We hear much good advice about keeping out of debt. Saint Paul has something better to offer. Get in debt! Give your life the impetus of a realization of that love so amazing, so divine that the whole realm of nature could never repay it. Only such an acknowledged obligation can redeem our lives from tawdriness and selfishness. "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God." "I am debtor to the Greeks and to the Gentiles."

II

MASTERS OF ARTS

HELEN KELLER has in her autobiography a quaint observation regarding her college examinations at Radcliffe, which will find an echo in every student's heart. "It is remarkable," she says, "the number of things one knows which are not in the examination paper." We have all sat in the hot schoolroom in June, biting the ends of our pens and staring blankly into space, wondering by what black, diabolic art the teacher, instead of asking for any of the thousand and one things we knew perfectly, managed to pick out the small dozen which by some chance we were not able at the moment to recall. Nor does the wonder by any means end with our formal school days. The examination paper with which we are confronted in the larger school of experience has the same way of skipping the things we are best prepared on. Our passing grade depends on the mastery of arts which the textbooks hardly ever mentioned. We learn three or

four languages, and have them at command, only to find out that the chief examination is on holding our tongue. We master three sciences, and then discover that the world lays nearly all its stress on the science of keeping our temper and getting along with people, which was never expounded to us out of the book. With our heads full of history we are examined on prophecy, the ability to foretell the probabilities of to-morrow and act with wisdom accordingly.

To win the degree of Master of the Arts of Life is a far more considerable undertaking than to become a Master of Science. Bulk of information might fill the latter requirement, but a mastery of the finest of fine arts—that of living—is never to be achieved in some study “far from the madding crowd’s ignoble strife,” but in our contacts with people in the friction of the street and market place. The real demands of life which we must meet resemble with far more closeness the difficult achievements of a circus performer than they do the studious pursuits of a library.

1. *Standing on Your Head.* Can you stand on your head? This is a strange question, but we find as we go along with the years that it

counts about fifty per cent in the sum total of accomplishment. When young Disraeli was making his first campaign for Parliament a voice in the audience called out, "We know what the Whig candidate is standing on, and what the Tory candidate is standing on, but what are you standing on?" "I'm standing on my head," was his ready reply. In the eddies and cross-currents of modern life a clear head is the only secure standing ground. What distinguishes a lawyer of the first rank from the average one is the ability to disentangle from all the facts the essential point on which the case will turn, and carry it on that point. It was said of Rufus Choate that he had an "instinct for the artery." In like manner we need to be able to distinguish those courses which are thoroughfares to a goal worth reaching from those inviting paths which are only blind alleys. We stand on our head when we are not swung about by the gusts of passion, but can think things through to their final and logical outcome. The effect of city life has been well described as "a deliberate rush at every one of the five senses." It is a rush at the mind as well. Specious and plausible views of life demand our suffrage

under the terms of what Emerson said was Margaret Fuller's slogan—"I don't know where I'm going—Follow me!" Paul numbered this among the indispensable arts. "In mind be men." "Be no more children, tossed to and fro, carried about with every wind of doctrine." Jesus continually threw men back on themselves by his question, "How does it seem to you?" It is a worthy ambition for a person to want to stand on his own feet. But that is only part of the battle. The larger half is to "stand on his own head."

2. *Walking the Tight Rope.* A rare degree of physical skill is required in a man to keep himself moving along one small wire, holding his balance against the forces that would pull him to one side or the other. But the question whether we can walk the tight rope, hold ourselves in concentration along one line against distracting forces, is a cardinal one in life's test. Saint Paul mastered it—"This one thing I do." Thomas A. Edison did it, working for almost two years, sometimes sixteen hours a day, to make the first phonograph record the sound "sh." It is a large part of every notable career. Noah Webster worked thirty-six years on his Dictionary; Bancroft, twenty-six years

on his History of the United States; Gibbon twenty years on The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; Michael Angelo took seven years to paint the Sistine Chapel ceiling; Titian worked seven years on the Last Supper, and Da Vinci four years on the head of Mona Lisa.

And what shall we say of Victor Hugo, who, when he was writing Notre Dame, sent all his clothing out of the house lest he be tempted to go out? or Thackeray, whose Vanity Fair was refused ten times? or, rising to a higher realm, of Robert Morrison and Henry Martyn, who worked heart-breaking years in China and India without a single convert? The measure of a man's soul is his ability to disregard the hindrances and concentrate his energy on the achievement; to put aside the accidents of a relation, a work, or opportunity and grasp the reality and hold to it.

3. *Building the Human Pyramid.* This is a fine thing to see in a gymnasium or on the playgrounds. A number of men are standing in a haphazard group. Suddenly the whistle blows and each man falls into his place in adjustment with the others, and in a few seconds the unorganized mass becomes a sym-

metrical living pyramid. But it is a much finer thing to see in the lives of people built into the achievement of some common good. It is a truth that we fully learn only by experience, that our net contribution to the world's good depends rather less on our individual endowment of genius or talent than on our ability to get along with folks, to hold our individual preferments in subordination to the larger purpose, and to endure even the harsh asperities of others for the sake of some shining goal to be reached only through cooperation. It is easy enough to go along forcing others to adjust themselves to our moods, absolving ourselves by the reflection, "I am a plain, blunt man." When told that he must sit next a certain bishop at a dinner party, Henry Luttrell said, "I do not mix well with the Dean, but I should positively effervesce with the bishop." It is much easier to "effervesce" with uncongenial persons than to adjust ourselves to them in cooperative service. Lincoln never better illustrated that fine art of subordination of self by which he towered to greatness than in his saying, "I would hold McClellan's horse if it would bring us a victory." For the sake of national unity, Von

Moltke, a naturally impulsive man, "could hold his tongue in seven languages." It was the fine art of Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.

Verily, art is long. Our hope would be small without the resources of the Head Master. We are not dependent on the teaching of formal precept, but ours is that same divine curriculum of companionship through which the impulsive Peter was graduated to a magnificent stability and the narrow and bigoted Paul became a living epistle of love.

III

ARE YOU A PERSON OF DISTINCTION?

ARE you listed in Who's Who? No? Then you can hardly be a person of distinction, for the advertisement claims it to be a biographical dictionary of the "distinguished persons" in the United States.

We do not like the invidious classification. It is artificial. Yet it is widely used by college authorities as a sort of rough index of success. To be listed in Who's Who in America is concrete evidence that you have "arrived." On the basis of this book, to go to college is to increase your chances of "arriving" by one thousand per cent.

It has a certain real value in stating in graphic terms the advantage education gives for achievement in life. Yet when one considers what real distinction in life must be, how outward and mechanical such a basis is! Carlyle rightly protests that we pay too much attention to a person's outward trappings. We bow profoundly and say, "Good morning,

Clothes," "Good morning, Medals," when what we ought to recognize and honor is the thing beneath and say, "Good morning, Soul."

The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

A man coming out from a banquet recently said to a companion, "Do you know that there was represented at that banquet wealth to the amount of about thirty million dollars?" "Yes," was the ready answer, "and conversation to the amount of about thirty cents." The distinction was all on the outside.

What are the final and valid marks of a person of real distinction? Laying aside such things as certificates of deposit, membership in clubs, college degrees, and dress suits—because, like the celebrated "flowers that bloom in the spring," they have nothing to do with the case—what remains? Can we find a more ready and serviceable gauge than the one Henry van Dyke has given:

Four things a man must learn to do
If he would keep his record true:
To think without confusion clearly,
To love his fellow men sincerely,
To act from honest motives purely,
And trust in God and heaven securely.

1. *"To think without confusion clearly."* Surely, this would make one distinguished in any company. Most men bolt their opinions as they do their food. Their ideas are as much prepared and predigested as their breakfast food. The newspaper, the popular catchword, the shopworn proverb—these become so readily our substitutes for mental self-direction. President Wilson said recently, "As never before, we are living in a confused world." Moral issues are clouded. The person who thinks at second- or third-hand gets easily lost. To have a clear personal grasp of the principles of Jesus, to know their meaning in terms of the day's work and problems, to be able to separate the kernel from the husk of truth—here is distinction!

2. *"To love your fellow man sincerely."* There are four ways of loving our fellow men. Three of them are very easy. One is the hazy way, very popular. It gives a certain emotional satisfaction to cherish a vague and airy sentimentalism about men. It prompts to no action. It lays no cross on one's life. It does not deal in concrete people; it prates airily of "humanity." Another is the interested way, to love those whom it pays to cultivate. An-

other is to spend the whole of one's affection within the charmed circle of kindred and congenial spirits. Christian love is not any of these. It comes from a belief in men's worth; is built on their needs. The "interesting" man to Jesus was the man in need, not, as is so often the case with us, the talented, the clever, the congenial. To love sincerely is to find all need interesting.

3. *"To act from honest motives purely."* That means to be convinced that God cares most of all for the quality of the inner life; to know, as Maltbie Babcock put it, "To be faithless is to fail, whatever the apparent success of earth; to be faithful is to succeed, whatever the apparent failure of earth."

4. *"To trust in God and heaven securely."* "If you believe in God," wrote Robert Louis Stevenson, "where is there any room for terror? If you are sure that God, in the long run, means kindness to you, you should be happy."

There is only one Who's Who in America that signifies. It is the Lamb's Book of Life.

IV

DOORKEEPERS

"THE church needs a few ushers, but we can't all 'ush'; there is room for about a dozen deacons, but we can't all of us 'deac.' What shall the rest of us do?"

So ran the perplexed query of a layman during the Men and Religion Movement.

Why not be doorkeepers?

We think of the confession of David, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of wickedness," as a beautiful statement of the truth that even the lowest place in the service of God ranks higher than any station outside of it. But when we think of what the function of the doors of the church really is, in the largest sense, the office of doorkeeper, instead of being a minor and incidental one, looms large.

The final problem of a church is not one of finances or even of audiences. It has to do with doors. It is the problem of keeping its doors swinging inward, so that it may receive and grow; and swinging outward, so that it may give forth in ministry.

Some church doors do not swing at all. Their motto is "Statu Quo." New faces in the pew, new names on the roll, new tasks laid upon the heart—these come only like the rare visits of Halley's comet. They frequently speak of holding their own, sweetly oblivious of the fact that in the realm of living things there is not to be found such a preposterous anomaly as anything merely holding its own.

Some church doors swing only inward. They do not truly represent One who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. They are centripetal forces in a community—drawing to themselves. They are rarely ever consciously selfish, but lack vision. Very insidiously the achievement of a church's maintaining itself in health becomes an end in itself.

The doors of a church must be kept open so that the wind, the breath, the Spirit of God may fill it. Frequently we enter a church building which has been closed for a week and sense the mustiness and heaviness of the air. What a tonic it is to fling wide the door so that a fresh breeze may vitalize the atmosphere! Now, in the conduct of worship there abideth these three—art, music, and air; but the greatest of these is air. A minister paused

in a service once, saying, "We will now continue the worship of God by opening the windows." He was not irreverent. In that case it was the indispensable condition of worship. Chrysostom himself is no match for carbon dioxide.

The same truth lights our way as we go on in our thought from the church as a building to the church as a fellowship of believers. The people who cannot be spared are those whose spirit, prayers, and eager sympathies are doorways through which that breath of God which swept over the hearts of men at Pentecost and touched them into life may find access to men. Such people create a spiritual climate, free from the nipping frost of cant and warm with sincerity, in which it is as normal and natural for a soul to open out to God as it is for a valley to blossom under the breath of June. It is a very easy thing for a minister to say from the pulpit, "The doors of the church are now open." Whether it is true or not is quite another thing. That depends on the doorkeepers.

It is a work of eternal vigilance to keep the doors of the church open to the sounds of the world's need and pain. The president of the

New York Society for the Prevention of Unnecessary Noise has had constructed in her residence on Riverside Drive a sound-proof room. Below in the streets is the ceaseless jar of the world's life. Still below that is the shriek and rumble of the railroad traffic on the water level. But into that sound-proof room no wrangling note of turmoil ever penetrates. It is a sobering thought that the church may easily become such a sound-proof room, admitting into its confines of quietness and content no disturbing reminders of the world's aching heart and sin. "Peace, Perfect Peace," may be its only anthem, so that it forgets to turn over the page to the less sedative strains of "Rescue the Perishing." God never speaks so directly to his church as through the deep-throated voice of the world's misery, and every member who by his sympathies enables the church to continually hear the "still, sad music of humanity," lays upon its heart the restless urge which the fellowship of his sufferings brings.

Open my heart to music; let
Me thrill with spring's first lutes and drums;
But never let me dare forget
The bitter ballads of the slums.

A doorkeeper lets the doors of the church swing outward, so that lives which have felt the impression of the Master's Spirit may go out to expression in his service. After the first sermon at Capernaum Jesus "went from the synagogue into the house"—there to carry the truth he had himself spoken, through the healing hand on the fevered brow. Through doors that swing outward the church emerges to sacrificial activity, "the creed of creeds, the ministry of loving deeds."

V

IS GOD ON YOUR VISITING LIST?

A RECENT novelist has eloquently described the religion of one of his characters in the sentence, "She had God on her visiting list."

Nothing could be added by enlarging on the theme for a whole chapter. It aptly describes, not only that particular woman, but also the widespread formal, polite conventionality which so often masquerades as religion. It reminds us of the statement in the obituary notice of an English squire: "He was not interested in religion, but in all other respects he was a consistent Protestant."

A great many people have God on their visiting list. Their relation to their Creator is polite and respectful. It adheres to the lines of good form. It is sustained with about the same warmth and from something of the same motives that one keeps in touch with a rich uncle from whom he has distant expectations. It is this attitude which gave rise to the observation that many people took their Christianity like vaccination for smallpox, taking

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just enough to prevent them from catching the disease.

The social forms by which many people pay their religious duty are varied.

1. *The Occasional Call.* It is bad form to neglect one's calling list. Smith aims to call on Jones every so often; he does not want to let Cousin George, who is a little sensitive, and to whom it pays to show attention, feel that he is forgotten. So he calls there. Likewise he goes to church on Easter and Christmas, perhaps also on Children's Day. Or he goes with the lodge to the Memorial Service and lives in a glow of righteous exaltation for six months. In a very different sense from the prophet Elijah, "In the strength of that meat he goes forty days."

2. *The Week-End Visit.* This is popular as a religious as well as a social institution. The rest of the week need not take its cue too slavishly from Sunday. The week-end visit at church concludes; "To-morrow to new fields and pastures new." As the somewhat terrible cynicism of Bliss Carman's poem, "Grass," puts it:

They're praising God on Sunday,
They'll be all right on Monday,
It's just a little habit they've acquired.

A couple came to a Chicago minister to be married. The groom asked if it would be proper for them to kneel down and pray, and on being told that it would be very fitting, inquired how long they should pray. "O, that is for you to judge," said the minister, "just a short prayer." Then the groom had a sudden inspiration. "I'll kneel down and count twelve," he said. We smile, and yet that is a very common idea of prayer—kneeling down and counting twelve, or pronouncing other words equally meaningful; just going through the motions. It bears the same relation to real worship that slipping your calling card under the door bears to communion with a friend.

3. *The Annual Visit.* This has its vogue. It frequently comes in Lent. It is a regular affair, just as the children go out to Aunt Mary's for two weeks every summer. It is a good thing, for frequently such a concentration of religious thought and practice is a tide which taken at the flood leads on to spiritual fortune. The trouble is that so often after the flood recedes the beach is left totally high and dry. After Easter we take the decorations down. We stack up the gilded lettering, "He is Risen," away behind the coal bin in the

church cellar, to be used next year perhaps. A sad symbol of the treatment accorded the Easter truth. The living truth, "He is risen," is frequently dismantled and tucked away in an unused corner of the mind.

4. *The Sick Call.* This call is all that God ever receives from some. Too busy in health, he is on their visiting list only in affliction. Then "they call upon the Lord in their trouble." What a ghastly relation to him whose mercies are new every morning and who would daily bear our burden!

Jesus said, "Abide in me." He did not say, "Visit me occasionally." We abide when we do all things as unto him, squared with his purpose, directed by his Spirit. When we abide we rejoice. "If ye abide, . . . ye shall ask . . . and it shall be done." When we abide we bear fruit. "He that abideth in me, the same beareth much fruit."

VI

THINKING IN A CIRCLE

DR. RICHARD C. CABOT, in that amazingly suggestive book, *What Men Live By*, describes with a fine insight a common mental process which easily tends to become a fixed habit unless it is checked. He calls it "thinking in a circle" and gives a very convincing diagram and illustration which holds the mirror up to our own nature. Here is the way the merry-go-round in a man's mind frequently runs: "(1) I must find some work; (2) Am I fit for any? (3) How lonely it is to be one of the unfit! (4) This loneliness is killing me. (5) I can't stand it, so (1) I must find some work," etc. Thus the mind runs around the dizzy circle.

"Vacillation," he says, "has the same circular character or pendulous swing." Here is the inside working of another piece of mental machinery: "(1) I guess I'll buy some stock

at once, but (2) the price may fall. (3) I guess it's safer not to buy now. (4) But there is a splendid chance to get rich if I buy now, so (1) I guess I'll buy some stock," etc.

"Break away! Think straight in some direction!" This advice, we all recognize, is a big improvement on endless swinging around the circle. But how to do it—there lies the rub! General Robert E. Lee had often to face the problem in the concrete form in which it comes to all of us. After long hours of working on the details of some piece of military strategy, he would often seek out Longstreet and say: "I need a tangent. My mind has got to working in a circle." In the counsel of that alert and friendly mind he found the tangent that led him straight to some decision.

A wise friend may often serve as a needed tangent. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." But there is a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother, with whom the ultimate solution of the problem lies.

Worry does its greatest damage through the vicious character of its circular swing. It accomplishes nothing but the breaking down

of the brain cells and the dimming of the native hue of resolution of the spirit. "It's not the jumping hurdles that hurts the horses' feet," said a wise stable groom. "It's the hammer, hammer, hammer on the hard highways." Many a mind which has met great issues and crises bravely and serenely is broken down by a succession of ignoble cares. The anxious foreboding within the closed circle of the same thorny problem speedily robs us of the mood of victory.

Jesus gave himself unreservedly to meeting this aspect of men's lives. To replace a vitiating worry by a confident trust he ever reckoned among first things. In his revelation of the good purposes of the Father, and the Father's knowledge and love of his children, he gave men a tangent which led them out to freedom and peace. When one is lost in the woods and is traveling in a circle the best thing to do is to climb a tree and get one's bearings and so bring to a confused mind the steadying power of a long perspective. That is just what filial trust does as we catch its contagion from Jesus. It does not dislodge all difficulties or solve all perplexities. These remain. But trust gives a new might with

which to deal with them, a readiness to do our best and leave the issue with him. To know that God's

greatness flows around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness, his rest,

is to emerge from circles into the saving health of straight lines.

Temptation waxes strong in circles. It is the repeated insistence of an image returning to the mind which finally carries away resistance like the undermining of a dyke by a spring freshet. The mind returns to the alluring temptation as the bird circles around the serpent. As we look at the life of the Master we see how again and again the same temptations that assailed him in the wilderness recur. Yet he did not lose his way. He always found the will of his Father the straight line which led him unerringly to the mark of his high calling. With every temptation there is a way of escape. Joseph found it. "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Peter found it. "We must obey God rather than man."

Edward Rowland Sill gives us a clue toward changing little circles into noble highways;

Forenoon and afternoon and night, forenoon
And afternoon and night, forenoon and—what?
The empty song repeats itself—no more?
Yes, this is life. Make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,
And time is conquered and thy crown is won.

VII

THE GIANT THRILLER

"MOTHER," said a little boy, as he stepped off the roller coaster at Coney Island, between gasps as his jumping heart settled back from his throat to its normal place, "I'd like to live on a Giant Thriller." He looked back longingly at the great serpentine curves over which he had just traveled with such tingling sensations to heart and head.

No doubt we have all at times shared his wish. And a great many children of a larger growth continue to cherish the desire in one form or another, long after they have ceased to give it such frank expression.

Life to a large number of people is just that—a Giant Thriller. It holds just so much "permanent possibility of sensation." Its final end is not so much the destination it reaches as the number and degree of thrills, excitement, and pleasure which the ups and downs of the journey may be made to yield. It is a sort of colossal amusement resort in

which the modern Shylock whets the edge of his appetite and demands, not his pound of flesh, but his hour of stimulated thrill. Some one said of Whistler that he always lived up to his emotional income. To be really able to do that in a crude way, to fill one's days with the greatest number and variety of electric shocks and have its dull and quiet hours figure as the occasional period amid a long and bright succession of exclamation points—this is the chief end of man according to the (very much) Shorter Catechism of the multitude.

This modern quest of a thrill, unlike the spirit of intelligent adventure in "the spacious days of the great Elizabeth," is not a noble one. Its cheap and tawdry scene is for a large part the saloon, the theater, the dance hall, the erotic novel, the moving pictures. He would be blind who failed to see the real social service and possibilities of moving pictures. He would be blind too who failed to see in many of them the unwholesome refuge of vacant and rapidly disintegrating minds. Its cheap terrors, crude substitutes for humor and vulgarization of love are forces yet to be reckoned with. Life as a roller coaster of pleasur-

able thrills, refine the character of the thrills as one may, is still a poor thing. It makes thin souls, flabby, irresponsible, and stupid.

The Merry-Go-Round is another of the people's playthings which represent a real and common attitude to life. It is not characterized by the ardent chase of pleasure. It is the unthinking and limp acceptance of a little track of routine and convention which sends one day around the same circle as another. Each day has the same thoughts, as the barrel organ has the same tunes. This circle is by no means a depraved one. A great many thoroughly upright and likable people act on the assumption of life being a more or less aimless spinning around the same groove in which their part is to get as comfortably fixed and pass the time as pleasantly as possible. But this assumption carries a great liability—disappointment. This complaint was voiced not long ago very exactly: "I've spent all my life making money to get food to eat and clothes to wear. The food doesn't agree with me and the clothes don't fit. I guess I must be a failure." He certainly was! One may come to the end of the most placid and unruffled existence conceivable, but if his life has never

been stirred by noble aspirations, he may cast his final ballot with Macbeth :

It is a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

It seems strange that any one in his right senses should wish to ride on the "*bump the bumps*." It is a long slide broken here and there by round protrusions, against which one is violently thrown if he does not steer clear of them. No doubt it is the balked disposition of fear which finds gratification and makes the ride popular.

Is it too much of an extravagance to say that the aim of life to some is to avoid as many of its risks of misfortune and trouble as possible? This world, it seems, is a vale of tears; trouble comes to all. Hence the art of life consists in skillfully missing as many of its bumps as you may. This conceives of happiness in the wholly negative terms of escape. And, of course, it misses it completely, for happiness is never negative; it is always positive. It is never the mere avoidance of evil; it is always the presence of active good. What shall it profit a man if he escapes

every conceivable misfortune, if at the same time he misses everything else. Peabody says finely of Jesus, "Joy and sorrow were never ends to be gained or avoided; they become the mere rhythm of his step as he moves steadily toward his supreme desire." It is as vain to compute the success of life in terms of the disagreeable things escaped as to reckon it by the empty hours of sleep.

A truer symbol of life which the playground afforded was an old cloth-covered prairie schooner preserved as an adjunct to a Wild West show. Here was the relic of a great adventure in faith, hope, and love, and as such a symbol of life defined in its highest terms. The pioneer who went out, like Abraham, "not knowing whither he went," yet daring to believe in the future, a gentleman unafraid of the bright face of danger, impelled by the love of family and kin to give them a little better stake in life than he began with—this man *lived*. And as he journeyed, taking both joy and sorrow as incidental risks of the road, he cleared the way for another, so that he did not

alone

Conquer and come to his goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild,

This is the life to which our Master calls us, a sharing in the adventure of love which chooses the spiritual in place of the merely sensual and economic. It is a pathway of joy incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

VIII

ON THE LINE OF DISCOVERY

AMONG all the tributes that have been paid to Gladstone, one that comes nearest to the secret of the abounding vigor and freshness of his ninety-year span of life was the remark of John Morley: "He kept himself on the line of discovery." At an age when most men twenty years his junior were completely occupied with the reminiscences of distant years, his heart and mind were busy with the problems of to-morrow. It is a phrase which interprets the interest and achievement of any life.

The zest of life lies in its ventures. Kipling has put into classic form in his "Pioneer" a man who lived on the line of discovery:

"There's no use in going farther, it's the edge of cultivation."

So they said and I believed it; broke my ground and
sowed my crop;
Built my barns and strung my fences in a little border
station

Hid away beneath the foothills where the trails run
out and stop.

But a voice as clear as conscience rang interminable
changes

On one everlasting whisper, day and night-repeated
—so—

“Something out there, something hidden—Go and look
behind the ranges!

Something lost behind the ranges—Lost and waiting
for you—Go!”

So he leaves the comforts of a settled farm, for hardship and privation, drawn by the insistent lure of discovery.

We all begin life on the line of discovery. The world is new every morning and every day a fresh delight. The magical storage battery of curiosity supplies endless energy to every faculty. The greatest loss in the years that follow is not so much that they bring the philosophic mind, as that with their more settled aspect we allow the familiar outline of our little world to become a twice-told tale and stop discovering. One of the characters in a story by O. Henry says of the town in which he lives, “The trouble with this place is that everybody in it dies when they get about twenty-one, and they don’t do anything but snore and toss around in their sleep the rest of their lives.” It is a case of the tree about which one can say, “It grows,” becoming

the flag pole about which all that can be said is "It grew."

With unerring instinct Jesus waged continual war on self-satisfaction as the great arch enemy of growth. His parable of the full storehouse, in which the man who says to his soul that he has goods laid up for many years finds that in that very hour his life is gone, is one that finds daily application. It is true of the teacher. When he stops learning and trusts to doling out the same parcels of his fixed stock of knowledge, that very day his spontaneity, freshness, and contagion, his very *life* as a teacher, is gone, and another routine machine is added to the world's already overstocked supply. It is the sad tragedy in the life of the preacher or other professional man which we call "the dead line."

Christianity was first called "the Way" before any formal name was given to the religion of Jesus. It states Christian discipleship in the right manner—in terms of motion. Rightly apprehended, being a Christian is not so much a process of anchoring one's soul in the haven of rest as it is of sailing the seas with God. It keeps men on the line of discovery.

Prayer is a sure line for the discovery of God and the exploration of the hidden self. Jesus's idea of prayer lifts it out of the realm of a bargain-counter transaction with the world's Storekeeper into that of communion with the Father. Prayer is to religion what experiment is to science. It is the personal verification of hypotheses and probabilities. Acting on the faith that God is, it finds him. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man is like the little Santa Maria setting out from the port of Spain on a great voyage of discovery. And as the evidence that it has really discovered the Father it brings back the wonderful treasure of a changed life—new powers brought to light in the hidden continent of the soul.

By *service* we keep ourselves on fresh pathways. "Men grow quickly on battlefields," said a wise French campaigner. We find ourselves through responsibility and effort. General Grant, a failure in the tannery at Galena, only came to himself under the spur of Shiloh and Vicksburg.

By the cultivation of *active sympathies* life is kept out of blind alleys. It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that a

loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge. Sympathy is the rarest form of travel. What travel does for an alert mind, quickening the sense of life, replacing a threadbare set of thoughts with new interests, putting ourselves in the place of another with sympathetic concern does for the soul. When the prophet Ezekiel, depressed and melancholy in an alien land, entered into the lives of his fellow exiles, and "sat down where they sat," the somber hues of dejection and despair which had colored all his thinking gave way to the positive shades of love and faith. We speak complacently of "mellow old age," as though it were mellow of necessity. It is just as apt to be sour. It will be sour and the heart shriveled, unless it finds new leaseholds on freshness and unselfishness by a real stake in the lives of others.

After all, there is only one sure line of discovery. It is itself one of the great spiritual discoveries of Jesus—"He that loseth his life shall find it."

IX

GETTING INTO SOCIETY

GETTING into Society is a popular game.

During wars and rumors of wars we are continually regaled with vivid accounts of the invasion of New York by some possible enemy. But these highly imaginative invasions are never so interesting as the real invasion of the city which goes on every year. There is the invasion from Europe, running into the hundred thousands; the invasion from the country of young men and women, coming up to seek their fortune in the whirlpool. And much less noble, but not less real, the yearly invasion of people who have made their fortune in other places and who seek the city to "break into Society."

It is played with the most feverish spirit by those who lack most conspicuously any inner standards of worth, and who must keep alive their sense of personal significance by all sorts of outward recognition. This abode of the Blessed, the Elysian fields of Society

with a big S, has been well compared to the ladderlike arrangement of the Hindu caste system, where one must kiss the feet of the one above and kick the face of the one beneath. So the gentle art of snobbery goes on to new refinements among those whose only measure of personal position is the wholly negative one of exclusiveness.

It is a game for small stakes, which Thackeray has pictured in immortal fashion in *Vanity Fair*. "What I want to make," he wrote to his mother, speaking of the novel, "is a set of people living without God in the world, only that is a cant phrase." How well he succeeded, Lord Steyne, Sir Pitt Crawley, poor stupid Joe Sedley, and Becky, above all, answer in their own way.

To dress, to call, to dine, to break
 No canon of the social code,
 The little laws that lackeys make,
 The futile decalogue of mode—
 How many a soul for these things lives
 With pious passion, grave intent!
 And never even in dreams has seen
 The things that are more excellent!

Yet the very object of this trivial game, when conceived in a true manner, may be made one

of the largest and most worthy aims in life. To get one into society that is really worth getting into is the end both of education and religion. Education is a process of social adjustment. Its aim is to develop the individual and bring him into the most helpful social relationship with his fellows. It is a large function of religion to lead men into inspiring fellowship with great souls, and to initiate them into the great society of the helpers of the race.

Books are a sure and lasting means of getting into good society. A well-selected library is a gathering of the great, admittance into whose intimacy brings more real honor than all the court levees ever held. "The Four Hundred" most worth cultivating are not dressed in silk and spangled with diamonds; they are bound in leather and studded with gleaming thoughts. Some one has said of a group of young radicals in England that they climbed back stairs to dark attics and shut themselves in with the gods. One who in his library has never been "stung with the splendor of a sudden thought" has much to learn about good society. The real beginning of the true life of Keats was when as a boy the

entrance into the society of Homer's gallery of heroes was as though "a new planet swung into his ken." Here is where the Bible serves the race in such transcendent manner. The surest anchorage of our lives in times of bewilderment and the strongest lodestar in times of action is in its great souls. The man who knows Paul, whose heart is no stranger to the enthusiasm of Isaiah or to the devotion of John, who, above all, knows the moods and spirit of Jesus, is in good society.

The communion of saints—the fellowship of the redeemed—is the greatest society on earth. That grand old schoolmaster of Rugby, Dr. Arnold, once said, "Whenever I can receive into my care a boy fresh from his father, without emotion, it is high time for me to be off." No familiarity ever robbed him of the sense of the glory of his vocation. Whenever we can look at the familiar sight of a person joining the church, without feeling emotion, it is high time for us to be off too.

It is our reddest red-letter day when we get into that society whose names are written on His hands. When Jerry McAuley was so gloriously converted down in Water Street there was no mention of the fact in the society

columns in the New York newspapers. It was the greatest social event of the year, nevertheless. He had joined the immortals who here on earth were living in the power of an endless life. At one time when Mark Twain had received an invitation to dine with the emperor of Germany, his little daughter said, innocently, to him, "You'll soon know everybody except God, won't you, papa?" There was real pathos in the question. What matters a dozen kings or so on our calling list, if it is to be a case of "everybody except God"?

Have you ever joined the International Order of the Helpers of Men? It has never been unanimously popular. It was founded by One who is still regarded as a trifle eccentric in many quarters. Its charter reads: "Let him that is great among you be your minister." The Roman satirist, Lucian, long ago pointed out the fact that its basic idea was absurd—that of being brothers. But it includes those of whom the world is not worthy. O, if with the thousand and one lodges and societies we belong to, we would only join the human race—feel the pulse of its brotherhood, its twinge of pain as our own and lay its burden on our shoulders! When we get into that company

we do not merely ornament a drawing room for an hour, but shine as the stars, forever and ever.

“There is one great society on earth, the noble living and the noble dead.”

X

THE SUNNY SIDE OF TEN

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

MOST of us remember some lines back in our old copybooks, which ran like this:

Give to the world the best that you have,
And the best will come back to you.

In no place is the old truth so true as in the entrance requirement of the kingdom of God, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of God." The Master demands the very best we have—the childlike qualities of teachableness and faith. It is an inexorable condition that we bring these. But the return which he makes, good measure, pressed down and running over, is that he enables us to keep unwithered by age and unspoiled by custom those very qualities of childhood. To be a member of the Kingdom is to keep oneself forever on the sunny side of ten.

James Russell Lowell, when passing once, in the outskirts of Boston, a building which bore

the inscription, "Home for Incurable Children," said, playfully, to a friend, "They'll get me in there some day." That is just what he was—an incurable child, carrying over into his last years an irrepressible youthfulness of heart. That is what a real member of the Kingdom is—an incurable child.

On the sunny side of ten there is an atmosphere of trust. Have you ever thought of how much of the glory of childhood comes from the unruffled calm of its trust? It is only gradually that we come to realize that the years that set as lightly on our shoulders as a June breeze were years of intense strain and responsibility to our fathers and mothers. The child's world is a garden of delight because its boundless trust makes everything in it bloom as a spring day touches a valley and calls forth its beauty. Unsophisticated credulity is a childish thing, to be put away when one becomes a man. But a childlike trust is part of our permanent inheritance as joint heirs of Jesus Christ. "He careth for you." "He knoweth our frame." "He knoweth the way that I take." "He knoweth you have need of these things." A doctor told a student who complained of headaches and whose window

looked off into empty space that he needed something in his view to "lean his eyes up against." It is a good thing to lean our eyes up against the background of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The child lives in the present. To a child on a picnic there has been no yesterday; there will be no to-morrow. "One crowded hour of glorious life" is his. He is unvexed by past regrets or future fears, while we, his elders, live so largely in the day before yesterday or the middle of next week. Dr. William Osler tells us the problem of happiness is a very simple one. It consists merely in pressing two buttons, one of which shuts off the past and the other shuts off the future. Two buttons, that is all. So beautifully simple! It is too bad that he neglects to tell us just how to do it! He who has the keys of life and death is the only one who can push the buttons. "As a thick cloud have I blotted out thy transgressions"; that is the only assurance which can shut out the peace-destroying past. "I will not leave thee nor forsake thee"; that is what lifts the cloud of future fears. The Christian who is persuaded that He is able to keep that which he has committed unto Him,

may live as fully in the present as the most care-free child. The Jewish religion in the time of Christ knew only two days—yesterday and to-morrow. It is highly significant that the first recorded word of Jesus's public ministry was the word "to-day." "To-day" is the day of salvation, of opportunity, of joy.

On the sunny side of ten we live in an ideal world.

When I was a beggarly boy
 And lived in a cellar damp,
 I had not a friend nor a toy,
 But I had Aladdin's lamp.
 When I could not sleep for the cold,
 I had fire enough in my brain,
 And builded with roofs of gold
 My beautiful castles in Spain.

The world is full, then, of ideal personages and ideal forces. Prince Charming may appear from around the corner at any time. The pot of gold is at the end of the rainbow if we only hurry fast enough. The youthful Coleridge walking down the street, swinging his arms wildly, accidentally hits an old gentleman on the head and pauses politely to explain that he is cutting off the heads of Turkish infidels with his scimitar. From this realm of the ideal we emerge into what is called the

real world, and a glory has departed.' But the man of Christian faith, to whom God and the increasing purpose which runs through the ages are realities, lives in an ideal world. Creation to him is not a dreary mechanism of interlocked wheels, for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and its members have the dew of their youth.

Ponce de Leon set out in the wrong direction to discover the fountain of youth. It is not in the everglades of Florida. It is the eternal spring, a "well by the gate" in Bethlehem of Judæa.

XI

A BINET TEST FOR DEFECTIVES

SOCIETY is at last beginning to pay some attention to its ill-favored stepchildren. Reversing the policy of centuries of giving nearly all its thought and care to its promising offspring, it is acting on the discovery that schools should be not alone for the exceptional boy or girl, or even for the normal child. Its latest venture is in schools for the backward, the defective and subnormal. By looking at their needs, not with the eyes of unthinking tradition, but with intelligence lighted by love, it is doing wonderful things in preparing for life the crippled in body and mind.

The first step in such a work is to find out the degree of mental normality of a child. One of the most approved and scientific methods is what is known as the "Binet Test for Defectives," so called from its inventor. It consists of a number of simple questions and operations which readily disclose the degree of deficiency of eyesight or hearing, keenness of

observation, muscular response, and power of mental coordination. On the basis of this test the means and methods of education are determined.

If a test similar to that used for mental capacity in the schools could be devised to determine the degree of spiritual efficiency of the members of the church, it would be the means of large usefulness. Spiritual capacity and usefulness, of course, can never be measured by any kind of a machine, however cleverly constructed, nor judged by any list of superficial questions. We have seen too many disastrous snap judgments formed on the basis of the church's meeting or failing to meet some arbitrary and mechanical test which seems so important to the one who makes it that all else is left out of consideration. We have grown exceedingly weary of the dismal prophet who tells us that the prayer meeting is the "barometer of the church," and bewails the approach of dark and stormy days whenever the attendance (or the noise, perhaps) fails to register one hundred per cent.

Yet as those who are urged to show themselves approved workmen, the consideration of what would be some elements of a real test

of fundamental deficiency in the Master's service ought to be a vital one. It is not primarily a test of character which is proposed, or of sincerity or intent. We will make a large assumption and take those for granted. It would, rather, be along the lines of the Binet Test—one of Christian sense-development and nerve response. One vital test of deficiency in service for every member and every church would certainly be the question: *How far can you see?* It is easy enough to see the things that lie right in front of us in our routine work; it is not so easy to see over the hill of the years and catch a vision of the value of unspectacular long-range work. But it is far more important. It is easy to see the value of getting Mr. Brown, the cashier of the First National Bank, into the church, but it is quite another thing to see the value of holding and training the little freckle-faced, red-headed Jones boy, who does nothing in Sunday school but throw paper wads, to everybody's annoyance. The chances are that the latter is much more strategic. The financial results of a church supper are far more satisfying than the deficit incurred by a girls' club, viewed from a one- or two-year standpoint,

which is the one usually employed. Carlyle said of Macaulay that he had spectacles instead of eyes. Spectacles, seeing only the outward and obvious, will never serve for eyes in the work of the Kingdom. The long-range vision which plans for twenty years hence is necessary. "No one ought to be satisfied," says Dr. Cabot, "to test his work by any easier standards than these: First, am I seeing all the actual facts, the ever new and unique facts as they come before me? Second, am I tracing out, as far as I can, the full bearing, the true lesson of this movement or situation?" It would be an immeasurable boon to the statesmanship of the church if these tests were to become part of its inner consciousness. The church without a definite sacrificial policy for its boys and girls has been well compared to a dog which is being shipped by express and has chewed up its tag. It is going somewhere, but no one knows just where.

An agent of Tammany Hall in June, 1915, refused to take a lease on a piece of property desired for a new building for the organization because he could secure it for only two terms of ninety-nine years each! It recalls some old words about the children of this world being

wiser in their generation than the children of light. How much more essential is long-range vision to the Christian statesman!

Give me not scenes more charming; give me eyes
To see the beauty that around me lies;
To see the charm of souls, see angels shy
Among the faces of the passers-by.

How quick is your motor response? The lapse of time between the mental impression and its expression in muscular reaction is made of crucial importance in gauging the fineness of mental organization. It has the same cardinal place in measuring spiritual efficiency. It was a principle of Queen Elizabeth's—to which we owe the result that American civilization is Anglo-Saxon instead of Latin—that discovery without possession was without avail. The knowledge of spiritual truth without real possession by life response is equally futile. The response of the defective is like the theological student to whom the call for missionary service came and who answered, "Lord, here am I; send John."

A lady was being congratulated on her son's making the football team at college, and was asked what position he played. "I don't know," she answered, "but I think he is one

of the *drawbacks*." It may have been true. Many a player, with all the assistance of a fully equipped uniform, is not really a half-back but only a drawback. And when our response to the truth is slow and indistinct, that is our real position. The church does not need guards so much as it needs tackles in its ground-gaining offense. "Acts may be forgiven," says Stevenson, "but God himself cannot forgive the hanger-back."

XII

WHAT'S THE NEWS?

"WILL there be any newspapers in heaven, papa?" asked seven-years.

Father was an editor and his reply was brief: "I hope not."

No doubt the people who have been interviewed for the press very often will be unanimous in the opinion that there could not be a newspaper in heaven because there will be no reporters there. It raises a suggestive question as to just what would be deemed worthy of chronicle in a daily record of the events of earth seen in the light of heaven's standards, where not the outward appearance but the final value was seen. It is not so extravagant a fancy either. For, surely, in that Eye which neithers slumbers nor sleeps and which notes even the sparrow's fall, all things are unerringly noted as either trivial or great.

Such a record would be so different from the morning paper which is served up with our breakfast that it would be hard to recognize

our world through its pages. On that much we could all agree. We place hourly dependence on the paper to keep us in touch with the world, and life in the modern world would be almost inconceivable without it. Yet we realize that in them we see through a glass darkly. The truth is only approximated. A parade of mourners for those lost in a factory fire was held in New York in April, 1911. The headlines in the different papers the next day ran thus: 60,000 parade—Globe; 122,000 parade in rain—World; Estimate of 200,000 exceeded—Evening Sun; 300,000 in parade—Telegram; 50,000 walked—Sun; 80,000 marched—Tribune; 100,000 pass in pageant—Mail. "What is truth?" might well be a fair question!

Even in the most conservative papers, the seamy, feverish, and sensational aspects of life bulk out of their real proportion. A European reading American journals might be forgiven for concluding that we are degenerating, since the crimes, scandals, and divorces are served up with such embellishment. One needs to read papers like the Survey and the reviews to keep his balance and learn the world's real constructive work. Stevenson's

complaint is well justified: "So long as an artist is on his head, is painting with a flute, or writes with an etching needle, or conducts an orchestra with a meatax, all is well, and plaudits shower along with the roses. But any plain man who tries to follow the unobtrusive canons of his art is but a commonplace figure."

The thought of what the relative importance of the day's happenings would be in heaven's eyes, leads us to two truths about news that should never be allowed to grow dim.

1. *The real news of any time is the working of forces that are making to-morrow.* Had you asked a citizen of Rome in Nero's time, "What's the news?" he would have told you that the triumph in the Forum that day was the biggest thing in the world. Whereas, we know from the vantage point of to-day that the *real* news was that a little Christian prayer meeting was held down in the catacombs. That was the force that was making a new civilization. Beside it all the triumphs the Forum ever saw were about as important as the buzzing of a fly. An Englishman in the early part of the eighteenth century on being asked the same question would have told you

something about Parliament. He did not dream that the greatest event of a half century was the fact that up there in the Epworth rectory the tired and overworked mother of a large family was teaching her children to pray. Yet it is only a matter of sober history that in the quiet and obscure rectory was being shaped the force that was not only to revitalize England but also to bless the whole world. It is in the light of such truth that we must open our eyes on to-day and realize that wherever any personal force for the blessing of the days to come is being shaped, there is the real news as God sees it.

2. *Hence the street corner test is never the true test.* The blatant noise which it makes on the street is no test of the importance of anything. A newspaper in heaven would have a page of trade reports, but it would not be filled with stock quotations and bank clearings. The giving of the Widow's Mite would be worthy of an extra edition, for it was the largest financial transaction that ever took place on the planet in its influence. Here is a man who in the face of great temptation is holding on to his honor and keeping faith with his noblest self. That is the biggest thing in

the trade reports, as God views them. Here is an invalid blessing her little circle with unfailing patience and cheer. That is real news. Here is a woman going down to the slums of the city, putting herself into the lives of the unprivileged. Nothing in the city outranks the record of her day.

The man who truly sees is never overawed by mere noise. The greatest actions are done in small struggles. There are noble and mysterious triumphs which no eye sees save God's, no renown rewards, and no flare of trumpets salutes. But they are entered in his Book of Remembrance.

XIII

THREE CHAIRS

IN his description of the cabin in which he spent those memorable days on Walden Pond, Thoreau says that his sitting room contained three chairs—one for solitude, two for friendship, and three for crowds. There can be no doubt that the favorite one with Thoreau was the single chair that represented solitude, but he was wise enough to realize that even for one like himself, who could make such splendid use of solitude, the isolated life is incomplete.

Thoreau's three chairs well represented to him the furnishing of the ideal living room. This complete furnishing is by no means so common as we might imagine. Everyone moves in a superficial way, at least, in the three concentric circles of himself, his friends, and the world. But the concentration in one to the virtual exclusion of the others is far from rare. Perhaps the person represented by the three chairs is the most common—the man

who lives in the crowd with its changing scenes and outward interests, but who, if he is thrown on his own resources for a week, is unable to rub one thought against another for his own entertainment, and suffers terrible pangs of ennui. At the other extreme there are the souls which, whether very much like stars or not, dwell apart, and neither ask much from society nor give much to it.

One chair. It is a poorly furnished house that does not have its chair for solitude. "We are too busy, too encumbered, too much occupied." It is Amiel who is speaking. "In inaction which is meditative and attentive the wrinkles of the soul are smoothed away. Reverie, like the rain of night, restores color and force to the thoughts which have been blanched and wearied by the heat of the day." A celebrated philosopher while out making visits one afternoon turned in at his own door to pay a call without realizing that he lived there himself. There is no better place at which to pay a call, for we come to a sorry pass indeed when we have a long list of acquaintances, but know as little of our inner selves as of Afghanistan. To pay a visit to ourselves and learn what manner of men we

are is an indispensable condition of growth, mental as well as spiritual. It is a very different thing from a weakening indulgence in sentimental introspection, with the sad results of which we are all too familiar. Walt Whitman voiced a sturdy and very healthy protest against this kind of morbid self-questioning: "It is as though we should sit down to a meal and ask, 'Why do I eat? Why does this taste good?' or on a summer day, 'Why do I feel so good in the glory of the sun?' Why? Why? Why? Everlastingly picking life to pieces instead of living." Avoiding this extreme, however, there is still the other, that of keeping our minds so hospitable to outward things that we have never courage to fathom the rush of outside interests and find out the real rock bottom of our own beings. To let our interest wander in every direction comes to the same thing as having no interest in anything. The only way in which we profit by our experiences is in selecting those we choose to possess and in the chair of solitude to study, weigh, and make them our own. Rabbi Hillel used to dismiss his classes saying, "You may go now; I have a guest to entertain." The "guest" was his own soul,

Character needs solitude. We can never estimate the part played in the life of Lincoln by the fact that his early years were set amid the great brooding places of the earth, the silences of the hills and forest. With space for contemplation and reverie, he thought things through. John R. Mott has finely put the whole plea for meditation and prayer—"The streams that turn the machinery of the world, take their rise in solitary places."

Two chairs for Friendship. Is it true that close and intimate friendships are going out of fashion, just like family carriages, hoop-skirts, and other quaint customs of departed days? If it is, we are paying a heavy price for the inventions which have supplanted them. There is no doubt that the better means of communication, the endless multiplication of books, and the higher gearing of speed in the present days, have made us less willing to give up the time the formation and growth of an intimate friendship requires. There are other costs in frankness and humility. But the aspect of life represented by two chairs is one of the richest and as we look over the story of the most fruitful lives we find again and again the central turning point to have been

the formation of some fine friendship of lasting inspiration.

Three Chairs for Crowds. Not large crowds for most of us. Only a few ever live to count their influence in multitudes. But for all of us there is the danger of a premature satisfaction in a few choice fellowships and withdrawing ourselves from the larger circle of those in whose lives we could fill some real want, but who are less personally attractive. That ever-present remembrance in the mind of Jesus deserves a place with all: "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold." One of the most instructive things in his life was the intense degree with which he loved the close fellowship of congenial friends, the rare home at Bethany, and the reenforcement of that inner circle of Peter, James, and John. Yet he withdrew so rarely with these. They never obscured his eyes to that farther vision of the fields white unto harvest, the harassed multitudes of sheep without a shepherd.

XIV

HOW MUCH ARE YOU WORTH?

WHEN Li Hung Chang was visiting America a number of years ago he had a very disconcerting way of asking people he met, with Oriental blandness, "How much are you worth?" Occasionally he followed it with one very much more embarrassing in certain quarters: "How did you get it?"

It is not a very usual question, nor perhaps a polite one, but it is a fair one, and we cannot hope to permanently avoid it. How much *are* you worth?

The chemist has a ready answer. Supposing you weigh about one hundred and fifty pounds, he can tell you to a cent your material value. A French chemist has figured you out exactly. You are worth about eight dollars! There are in your body enough by-products to make an ordinary iron nail, enough salt to fill an ordinary salt cellar, enough sugar to fill a small sugar bowl, enough lime to whitewash a chicken coop, enough phosphorus to make a dozen matches, enough magnesia for one dose.

The albumenoids could be used by a tricky baker to replace the whites of a hundred eggs, and there would be fat enough to fill a ten-pound pot. Perhaps if you weigh two hundred pounds you are worth a little more. You are worth about nine dollars and fifty cents. But you will say, "I object to having my value stated in terms of physical by-products." Very well. Step on another scale.

The business man has a ready answer. The average cost of the upbringing of a child from birth to the age of twenty is \$4,150 and its average commercial value at that time is \$4,000. These figures are based on the net earning capacity of the average citizen for all the gainful occupations in California, capitalized at six per cent interest. As an investment it is estimated that by the age of thirty years the average man is worth \$16,000—\$4,000 value, plus \$12,000 gross earnings, and has cost \$10,150 to maintain, or a net gain of \$5,850 in thirty years. The same figure, \$5,000, is about what is awarded by the court when a suit for damages is brought against a railroad for the accidental death of an adult man.

Now, \$5,000 is a good deal more than eight or nine-fifty, but it is not much more satis-

factory. Few of us will be content to have ourselves measured by the same measure used for corn and coal. Some one will say, "You can't measure value without brains. It is mental capacity which determines values." So

The educator has his answer. It is not so easy to compute by rough processes, but it has alluring suggestions. The artist Millet buys some canvas and a few paints for sixty cents, and paints the "Angelus," which sells for \$105,000. Results: raw material, sixty cents; value of brains, \$104,999.40. Pig iron is worth \$20 a ton; made into horse shoes, \$90; knife blades, \$200; watch springs, \$1,000. Raw material worth, \$20; brains, \$980. This looks more like sense—a man is worth what he can do. But to rest value on mental capacity alone is poor calculation. The warden of Sing Sing Prison, in New York, said to a visitor whom he was showing through the prison, "We have here a first-class college faculty. There is not a college subject which could not be well taught by some one of the prisoners." Here was a wealth of mental ability, yet so far from being of value to society, its possessors were so much of a detriment that they had to be restrained by iron gratings.

The directing force is the final arbiter of a man's worth, and the only valid one. In all these calculations we have only come up by an unfrequented path to the standards of Jesus. A man's worth can never be measured in physical materials or dollars or brains in themselves, but in two terms only—character and service.

We cannot measure temperature by the pound or men by things. Man is a spirit created capable of a divine fellowship, and the currency of the Kingdom to which he belongs and in which his final value is reckoned is in purposes and ideals. It is computed by the degree to which we live up to the injunction of Burns,

Where'er you feel your honor grip
Let that aye be your border.

It is reckoned by the unattained to which we reach.

All I aspired to be and was not
Comforts me. That was I worth to God.

An Indian devotee, who added a large iron ring to his body every year, as a penance, finally weighed so much that the railroads refused to accept him as a passenger and

shipped him as freight. There are a great many people, who if they were weighed by what they carry inside of them in the way of character, would go forward as freight.

Service is the other test. Jesus's parable of the Last Judgment states the truth that worth is to be computed wholly in terms of expenditure. In the world of commerce we compute wealth in surplus and saving. In the Kingdom of God it is figured in things spent—the amount of concrete helpfulness and genuine love we have put into the lives of our brothers.

XV

THE SURPRISE OF LIFE

A LITERARY critic has told us that there are only seven original stories in the world and that all others are variations of these seven plots. One of the oldest and most universal of these seven stories is that of the ugly duckling, the despised creature of the barnyard, which surprised all the other fowls and itself most of all by turning into the beautiful swan. Cinderella, the delight of all young hearts, is another form of the same tale. It appears in the romantic career of Joseph. It is the tale of the rejected stone which becomes the head of the corner. In a very lofty and reverent sense, it is the story of Him who was despised and rejected of men, but unto whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess.

We cherish the tale in all forms, because it does for us a very large service. It pictures life in terms of its surprises. It witnesses to the fact that however humdrum and routine we may allow it to appear, life can never be reduced to exact formulas. No matter how

scientifically we may think and speak of causes and consequences, we make but a poor muddle of our calculations unless we continually allow for a variable "x"—the surprising fact that the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong. All who have lived long and who have given any thoughtful glance back, would agree that one of the strangest features of their lives has been in the unexpected part played by its unnoticed fragments and lightly esteemed remainders. Professor Moore, of Columbia University, spent an honored life as a teacher of languages, doing work of high scholarly value. One afternoon, for the amusement of some children, he wrote some playful little verses beginning, "'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house." All of his learned linguistic works have been forgotten, even by scholars; but the little verses have put on the bloom of immortality. It is only a vivid illustration of the truth that the thing most worth remembrance may be what is thought of least. Real romance is preserved in every life by the constant possibility of surprise. And it works mightily for our encouragement in service.

Unpretentious things have a surprising way of counting for more than our most elaborate efforts. How much more is our happiness governed by simple pleasures, simple comforts, and above all, simple goodness, than by our abilities or our cleverness! Men of the finest native talents are humbled again and again by seeing the much greater accomplishment of men far their inferiors in ingenuity and eloquence. Carlyle observes, "How much inferior for seeing with is your brightest train of fireworks to the humblest farthing candle!" It has been computed that it would take thirty-seven flashes of lightning to keep a common incandescent lamp burning for one hour. The surprise of life often comes in the greater power there is in the steady glow of faithfulness and kindness than in the flashes of talent and genius. There was irony in the remark made of a certain minister, that the best passage in his sermon was the passage from the pulpit to the vestry. But the finest passage of even the most eloquent utterance is that which carries the truth out into the intimacies of daily intercourse.

Unintended things often become the head of the corner. Miss Sullivan, the wonderful

teacher of Helen Keller, records this discovery in a letter written three weeks after beginning her deaf and blind pupil's education: "I am Helen's nurse as well as teacher. I like to have her depend on me for everything, and I find it easier to teach her things at odd moments than at set times." It is a wise discovery worthy the remembrance of any teacher. We are apt to consider as our life-work the things done at set times and then stumble on to the strange fact that the "odd moments" have produced as much or more in fruitful results. Life's best things frequently come from its interruptions. The very act of setting about things in a formal way, as though to say, "Here now, I am going to teach you something," or "I am going to do you good," often serves to close the mind we wish to reach; while the unheralded word thrown off in the course of the day's work, and hence real and genuine, carries conviction.

Incidental things are a never-ending surprise. We are frequently amazed at the smallness and apparent triviality of the things which people remember about us. We do our work, or make our speeches, and are disappointed to find that we are not recalled by our

main performances or public efforts at all. A lady in a Connecticut village told her pastor that all she remembered of a minister who preached there fifty years before, and who since rendered distinguished service as a bishop of the Methodist Church, South, was that two little beads of perspiration always formed on his brow when he preached. Her pastor replied that he would be willing to have every sermon of his forgotten, if the impression of earnestness and sincerity were strong enough to span half a century. We work in life's morning for its certainties; but at evening we shall doubtless rejoice most in its surprises.

XVI

SAFETY FIRST?

IN Mr. St. John G. Ervine's book of sketches, *Eight O'clock and Other Studies*, there is an unforgettable character portrait of a Mr. Timms, a clerk in a large London office. The life of Mr. Timms revolved continually around the thought: Supposing that one day he should be unable to work, what should become of him? He would awaken at night, crying out in fear because of some horrible dream in which he saw himself dismissed from the service of his employers for one reason or another. The same terror was his evil genius by day. So as the years passed, the despotism of this fear took heavy toll of the best possibilities of his life. Something inside of him would urge the quest of adventures. "Do something to show that you are alive," it would say, and the fear of endangering his position by some time yielding to one of these moods added another to his many terrors. He thought of marriage, and "the

thing inside" kept saying, "Risk it, man, risk it!" But the thought of the possibility of getting sick and out of employment, with a wife and perhaps a family to support, drove him back to the dreariness of his dingy bed-sitting room. Finally the inevitable comes; he loses his position and his savings rapidly dwindle. Sickness overtakes him and the doctor's verdict is that he has only a short time to live. The doctor is amazed at the calm which the announcement brings. "Thank God," said Mr. Timms to himself, "I am safe now." In three months he was dead.

It is a graphic and pathetic picture of the frightful cost of the worship of safety.

The wide popularity of the industrial slogan "Safety First" has been of immense service in reducing the number of preventable accidents, and has taken on the proportions of a national movement. In which we all rejoice. But this ideal, so eminently fitting for railroad and shop operation, is often transferred and set up as an ideal in a field where it can work only havoc—the world of moral action.

Safety First is the poorest motto which could possibly be taken for life. We may well

ask in these days of slaughter, "Can any good come out of Nietzsche?" But there is a fine word in his advice, "Live dangerously." He explains it as meaning, "I will try something I have not tried before; I will walk without leading strings; I will work in a fresh medium." In the struggle between the temptation to prefer ease and softness, quietude and safety, to risk, striving, daring, and adventure, the prize of getting the most out of life as well as keeping truest to the purposes of God belongs on the side of the daring.

Shall my life be ruled by small maxims or by large principles? This is the previous question every one must answer. The cult of the twin gods of Thrift and Prudence has always been a numerous one. Its most inspired scripture is, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." It loves "practical, hard-headed common sense." It delights in rule of thumb maxims for keeping the eye on the "main chance." It is safe and sane. But it is so hopelessly sane that it overreaches its mark, and a calculating prudence has destroyed more souls than prodigal vice. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," is sometimes nobly true, for, as Stevenson points

out, "To be overwise is to ossify; and the scruple-monger ends by standing stock still. Who, if he were wisely considerate of things at large, would ever embark on any work much more considerable than a penny postcard?" Can any risk in life be more hazardous than that of spending it making tame and dull little "half-penny postcards," when it might be made a living epistle of noble exploits?

Take friendship, for instance. How shall we deal with the alternate courses of risk and safety and risk there? The achievement of a fine friendship is one of the most worthwhile undertakings of life. But every true friendship is a risk. It lays our lives open to costly liabilities. So Prudence whispers in our ears: "Be not friendly overmuch. Be pleasant, cordial; cultivate the acquaintance of people who 'count.' But be careful. Don't allow your heart-strings to get such a firm half-hitch around another person that you can't let go while you are on the safe side of trouble. If you get in too deep, it is liable to cost you discomfort and money, and perhaps hurt your reputation." This is the siren voice which many follow to the barren rocks of selfishness. So they are safe—they avoid the risks, and

miss the finest joy life has to offer—the generous and uncalculating thrill of a loving heart. Then they wonder, very often, why life grows flat and stale. So by staying indoors we can avoid the risk of catching cold; but we will also miss the glory of the sunrise, the swing of the cloud in the midsummer sky, the subtile witchery of the twilight—in a word, life.

The service of Christ is a large risk. When anyone gives himself sincerely to a real bit of work in the church or Kingdom, he verily takes up a cross. It will surely cost money and toil. The chances are it will also mean misunderstanding, misrepresentation, and friction. Seeing only what is near, men side-step the task. On the altar of Safety, the privilege of being a colaborer with God is ruthlessly sacrificed. Is it worth it? In every field—in politics, in social service—the same interplay of risk and safety is seen. In every one is the brave entry made in the journal of the first minister in New England on the voyage across the Atlantic, eternally true—“Those that love their owne chimney corner and dare not fare beyond their owne towne’s end, shall never have the honor to see the wonderful workes of God.”

XVII

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT YOUR CHURCH TO DO FOR YOU?

THIS question makes a large assumption which is not always justified by any means. Many expect nothing of their church. They bring to it no earnest expectation of its doing anything definite, and they get just about what they bring—nothing. Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" had a blurred experience at church which is a common one:

An' I never knowed what he meant, but I thowt he 'ad
summat to say,
An' I thowt he said whot he owt to 'a said, an' I coom'd
awaay.

It is significant that on several occasions when Jesus did any works of healing he deemed it important to have a clear answer to the question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" The extent and clearness of expectation often determines the extent and concreteness of benefit.

There are some things which we have no

right to expect our church to do for us. It cannot save us. This is an obvious truth, but we should not forget that it has not always been so, nor is it to-day to multitudes of Christians. With a great price has this freedom been obtained for us. Nor can the church automatically improve us. This is not so clearly held in mind. It is easy to slip into the unconscious feeling that church-going works some kind of an automatic charm. We live in an age when so much is done for us by clever mechanical contrivances. Edison says the future is to be an age of buttons—simply press on the right button and dismiss the matter from your mind. We can cook breakfast in bed to music from the automatic piano. We do our housework with vacuum cleaners and electric irons, while the fireless cooker is getting dinner. All of which increases the temptation to think of spiritual things in automatic terms.

If we will swiftly glance at what their contact with Jesus brought to three widely different men, we will discover three things which are permanent elements of what we ought to expect of our church.

The first is the *Blind Man*. His answer to

Jesus's question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" was a definite one—"Lord, that I may receive my sight." We have a right to expect vision. There was organized a few years ago among people aroused by the miseries of preventable blindness, a society with a name as noble as its purpose—"The Society for the Conservation of Vision." That is just what the Christian Church is. It exists to wipe out the misery caused by preventable moral and spiritual blindness, and more particularly, to prevent it. If the wires are the sensitive nerves of a city, the parks its lungs, and the railroads its gigantic arms, its churches are its eyes, its watchtowers and hills of vision, which pierce through the smoke and grime and the fog of bewilderment to the Eternal. As a workman complained recently, "We work all day to make money and half the night to spend it; what we need is some one to tell us what it is all about."

But "vision" is an abstract and rather vague word. Schools, homes, and political institutions give vision. Expectation must be focused more closely. Three Greeks went to church one day in Jerusalem with a definite expectation which was met—"Sir, we would

see Jesus." That is still the supreme thing our church should do for us. When we get a real vision of Him who above all others saw life steadily and saw it whole, we are able to take up its tangled threads and weave anew.

The second man is *Peter*. His contact with Jesus evoked a strange cry—"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." That same contact should bring to us continually rebuke. We do not like rebuke. It is much more pleasant to hear smooth sayings. It is a common remark to hear, "I go to church to be comforted." And a right thing. But if we are always comforted at church, if we always enjoy the sermon, something is radically wrong. The sword of Christ which would destroy our superficial peace and shallow content has never left the scabbard. It was a fine compliment that Louis XIV paid to Massillon: "I have heard several great orators and have been much pleased with them; as for every time I hear you, I am much displeased with myself." Before Christ can touch the deepest level in man the man must be made thoroughly uncomfortable and discontented. When we cease measuring ourselves by the petty standards of our neighbors or our own

mean achievements, and really see Jesus, we feel the keen edge of a spiritual hunger.

The third man is *Matthew*. Contact with Christ for him meant inspiration and immediate action. "He arose and followed him." If we come ready to receive and cherish those high words of Jesus—his great imperatives, "Come," "Be," "Do," "Go"—we shall never find him to fail us. He brings the freshness of the heroic. Men are won not by premises or even by conclusions. They respond to the trumpet tones. A young soldier on a hospital cot pleaded with the doctor, "O, don't say I'm not fit for duty. It's only a touch of fever, and the sound of the bugle will make me well." The church which speaks the word of her Master always brings the medicine of the bugle.

XVIII

WHAT DOES YOUR CHURCH EXPECT OF YOU?

It is a sad but common mistake to imagine that we ever add to the permanent attractiveness of the church by minimizing or slurring over its costly demands and expectations. It is true, of course, that a church should be the most attractive place in any community. All that can be brought to it of fellowship, music, and inspiration, should be there as the fine gold of the sanctuary, adorning the doctrine of God. But it is a great blunder to think we ever make the church attractive by hiding the truth that at its center is not a flower garden but a cross. No one ever desired so passionately to win adherents as did Jesus, and yet he seemed to fear nothing so much as that people would get the impression that he was asking them to go on a picnic, a sort of rollicking pleasure trip down to Jerusalem, where the great rewards would be distributed. He could do more with twelve men who joined

him with a real sense of his conditions than with five thousand who would make him King because they had enjoyed a free dinner. There is keen truth in the satire of Sam Jones that the saying of Jesus, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me," is frequently interpreted as though it meant, "If any man will come after me, let him enjoy himself, and take up his ice-cream freezer and follow me."

Your church expects you *to believe in it*. Which is a very different thing from patronizing it, or giving it your cordial good wishes, or even filling up your Duplex envelope every Sunday. It means to believe that it has a mission in nourishing men's lives that nothing else can possibly replace. It expects you to believe in it as the architect believes in the steel frame of his skyscraper, or the engineer believes in the girders of his bridge; or, to take a far more suitable figure, as the farmer believes in rain. He may get along without paint on his barns; he may manage without a self-binder or a steam plow; but he does need commerce with the sky in the form of rain. So the conviction that the soul of man needs the life of God must be equally regnant.

WHAT DOES CHURCH EXPECT? 97

Religion's all or nothing; it's no mere smile
Of contentment, sigh of aspiration, sir,
No quality of the finely tempered clay
Like its whiteness or its lightness; rather stuff
Of the very stuff; life of life, and self of self.

It is true that the groves were God's first temples and that man can worship his Maker anywhere. But it is also true that the man who will worship *everywhere* is the man who has learned to worship *somewhere*. "Look out for that man," some one said of young Robespierre. "He's dangerous. He believes what he says." Your church expects "dangerous" believers.

It expects you *to prove it*. That is not to write a book of apologetics. The fundamental demand of the church on each one of us is not this detailed piece of service or that, however important it may be, but to prove its authority by our exposition of the kind of life it can create. We are expected to be living proofs of the ability of the gospel through the church to create character. We frequently hear people speak of doing church work and find that they refer to baking pies and sewing quilts, work that is not distinctly religious at all. "Men will wrangle for religion, work for

it, write for it, fight for it, die for it, do everything but live for it." The primary religious work is to live in the power of the Christian evangel.

Your church expects you *to project it*. Archbishop Whately was still the logician when he said, "Either give up your religion or propagate it." There is no middle course. The last paragraph of every effective sermon must always be made up of actions on the part of the congregation. Our church has a right to expect its impulse to travel down to our feet and make of us "souls in motion." In 1864, when Lee's army had entered Pennsylvania, a citizen of Philadelphia telegraphed General Halleck at Washington to know if he could be of any service in that vicinity. He received this grim reply: "We have five times as many generals as we want, but we are greatly in need of privates. Any one volunteering in that capacity will be thankfully received."

"Greatly in need of privates!" Plenty of volunteers for the seats of the mighty, but the earnest expectation of the church waiteth for the appearance of its "private projectors."

XIX

THE HIGHEST HEREDITY

THE phrase belongs to that maker of splendid phrases, David Starr Jordan. The most determining factor in every man's inheritance is not that which he gets from his grandfather but what he gets from himself. Every man is his own most important ancestor.

The nineteenth century gave us two dramatic literary pictures of heredity in striking contrast. One of them was Ibsen's *Ghosts*. It is a play full of characteristic Scandinavian gloom, showing the progress to tragic climaxes of a group of people under the relentless automatic control of the spent passions of their ancestors. It is full of a morbid fatalism, depicting a world where men move under the hopeless control of a dead hand. Its philosophy chains up human freedom in the meshes of an iron necessity more binding than the most rigid kind of foreordination ever conceived.

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley pictures a very

different kind of force, still terrible, still unescapable, but with a very different kind of source. Her Frankenstein tells the story of a student who constructed out of the fragments of bodies picked from churchyards and dissecting rooms a human form without a soul. The monster had muscular strength, animal passions, and an active life, but no "breath of divinity." It longed for animal love and sympathy but was shunned by all. For a time it followed obediently the dictates of its master, but gradually got away from his control, till finally, so far from being his servant, it becomes his ruler. It was most powerful for evil, and being fully conscious of its own defects and deformities, sought with persistency to inflict retribution on the young student who had called it into being.

Mrs. Shelley did not write Frankenstein primarily as an allegory but as a wild and powerful romance. It is all the more effective as a work of art in that it draws no lessons. The tragic movement of the tale is a living representation of the way a man's days and years gradually build up within a force of character whose movements he finally does not direct but obey. Christ's last words to Peter,

as recorded by John, have a startling, though wholly unintended application to the realm of character-building through habit formation: "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." The "other" who finally girds and carries us is the unconscious force which our yesterdays have created and placed on the throne.

The heredity we receive from others is never to be lightly regarded. The twentieth century is young, barely entered on its adolescence, yet it has already added distinctly to our knowledge and appreciation of the importance and laws of heredity. The whole new science of eugenics has been marked out and pretty well staked off in fifteen years. The future will give not less but more importance to the problems of heredity than ever before. But no possible advance in our knowledge of ancestral heredity will ever subtract from the truth that it is from ourselves that we receive the most determining inheritance. The classic pictures of "The Three Fates," blindly spinning and cutting the thread of life, is an

anachronism. We handle the shears for ourselves. The man of forty is under the "grip of a dead hand," but it is not so much that of his father as that of the boy of fifteen or twenty that he used to be. It is "the vanished yesterdays" which are the tyrants of to-morrow. Ruskin declares, with a fine appreciation of this truth, that he had rather hear people speak of thoughtless old age, than indulgently excuse "the thoughtlessness of youth." "Youth thoughtless, when the career of all his days depends on the chances or passions of an hour or the opportunities of a moment! A youth thoughtless, when his every act is as a torch to the laid train of future conduct, and every imagination a fountain of life and death! Be thoughtless in future years rather than now, though, indeed, there is only one place where a man may be nobly thoughtless—his deathbed."

There is only one real ghost who will ever haunt us. It is the vision of the man we might have been. In our brightest success and most abject failure he will be there, with a sad and wistful glance. The action of to-day, so apparently insignificant in itself, is determining whether we will leave to the man we will be

to-morrow the fine inheritance of a mind unspoiled by dissipation, trained to think and act, or whether we will throw away his inheritance before he has had a chance to touch it.

"The highest heredity" is, at bottom, a great message of hope. To think that the limits of possibility are finally set at birth makes for inertia, irresponsibility, and despair. But to know that to-day we are creating our own to-morrow is a sobering and ennobling inspiration.

One ship goes east, another west,
By the selfsame winds that blow;
'Tis the set of the sail, and not the gale,
That determines the way they go.

Never should this subject be left, however, without the remembrance that in addition to being the heirs of all the ages and of ourselves, we are "joint heirs with Jesus Christ." We are not left to work out our own salvation as a lonely *tour-de-force*, for it is God which worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

XX

CARRIED OVER FROM CHILDHOOD— LIABILITIES

THE glory of Christianity lies in the things it carries over from childhood. The fellowship of real Christians who have entered the Kingdom as little children and have kept those traits is the most youthful place in the world, as it is certainly the most glorious.

But not all the remainders of childhood are on the credit side. Some are distinct liabilities, over which a watchful eye must be kept. In the church we are sure to find some of the qualities of childhood, which, above all things else, called forth Jesus's most enthusiastic praise. In the church as well, however, we are unfortunately apt to find some things carried over from childhood which are large subtractions from its possible power. Three phrases, which are a part of the memory of everyone, perhaps represent better than anything else some attitudes which are responsible for big loss.

1. "*Now I lay me down to sleep.*" Pity the man to whom these unforgettable words do not embody the most sacred memories of life! They are universally freighted with the most tender associations, and it would be a ruthless hand which should seek to pluck them out of their place. But aside from their tender memories, these childhood words may well stand for a soporific attitude and intent all too common in the life of the church. It is all too common for men to leave behind that alert and vigilant wakefulness which characterizes them in their business life—the *qui vive* so necessary there—when they enter the worship and service of the church, and instead of summoning all their faculties together, they lay themselves down to slumber on a child's crib. Too many of our prayers begin, "*Now I lay me down to sleep.*" A man's-size prayer runs more like this:

Now I get me up to wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to shake.

"Why," exclaims Sydney Smith, "should we call in paralysis to the aid of piety?" A young minister from the West coming to a small New England parish, noticed on his first Sunday

that instead of the bell being rung in the manner to which he had been accustomed, it was tolled as for a funeral. He wondered who was dead, and at church time he found out. They were all dead. The deacons crept up the aisles like polar bears. The singing was what one would expect from Mrs. Jarley's wax works. The Sunday school was a fine demonstration of somnambulism. Very often the grand old words of the hymn bring to us quite a different sense than the one intended:

On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?

There is a provision in the Mosaic law against offering to the Lord a deformed ram or a sick ewe. Shall we offer to him any better, our hours of drowsiness, and reserve the wide-awake ones for the Board of Trade? By all means remember the evening prayer of childhood, but keep even a little clearer the ringing words of Isaiah, "Awake! Awake! O Zion! Put on thy strength! Shake thyself from the dust!"

2. *"You in your little corner and I in mine."* The words suggest the little reed organ in the primary room and the eager chorus of youthful

voices. Happy the church to which they suggest nothing else! Sometimes they inevitably suggest something by no means so inspiring—a lack of real cooperation between members and societies, so that whatever prosecution of the work there is is a case of you in your “little corner and I in mine.” It may be a case of too many Cæsars who care more about being first in the little Alpine village of some particular branch of work than second or third in the larger Rome. It may be simply the lack of a common vision which results in the different organizations of the church moving like a group of camp followers, instead of marching with the orderly swing of an army. Without the thought of the larger whole they frequently duplicate, compete, and tread on one another’s toes and even work at cross purposes. The result is a sad loss of energy and momentum. One of Kipling’s finest stories is that of “the ship that found herself.” In it he puts what is his one great message—the victory of discipline and organization over individualism and anarchy. The ship is making her first voyage and the different parts assert themselves in clamorous voices, each claiming its right to pull its own way and

complaining of the other parts. Finally a new voice speaks, which none of the parts recognize. It is the voice of the ship herself, the larger whole to which the parts belong. As they listen to that voice and own its authority harmony comes out of the confusion and the ship "finds herself." In the epistles of the New Testament we find the story of a church that found herself, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." As a church draws out from their isolated corners its various forces to the center of a common related purpose it forms for conquest.

3. "*Ene, mene, mine, mo.*" Who does not remember the childish incantation of our games? It meant absolutely nothing to us. We knew nothing of its origin or purpose. Yet its rhythmic recitation gave us an undeniable satisfaction. It stands for the traditional repetition of ideas we have not possessed, or acts whose usefulness we have not investigated. A father asked his little boy recently what he had learned at school that day. He answered, "Gesind." On his father's mystification, he explained it. "Two gesind four twice; two gesind six three times; two gesind eight four times." That was all—"gesind"—words

without meaning, whose significance he had never possessed at all. Yet it is not uncommon, in much the same manner, to let the public preaching of the truth become a substitute for its possession by personal appropriation in our own lives. Often, too, our service is determined by what has been rather than what ought to be, decided by a fresh facing of our situation in an unconventional way. Douglass Jerrold said, "Some men can never relish a full moon, out of respect for that venerable institution, the old one."

"When I became a man I put away childish things."

XXI

“THE WILL”

IN his powerful and poignant little half-hour play entitled *The Will*, James M. Barrie has traced the growth of that strange and fatal sickness of the soul called Greed. The whole action takes place in a London solicitor's office to which a man comes three times, at intervals separated by about twenty years, for the purpose of making his will. The central character, Philip Ross, a young office clerk, possessed of a small legacy, is accompanied by his youthful and loving bride. She is weeping hysterically at the mere suggestion of an instrument so grisly and harrowing as a will. Her husband wishes to make the will in a single sentence leaving everything of which he dies possessed to his wife. She lovingly protests at being the sole beneficiary, and after much wrangling carries the point of having two of her husband's cousins provided with a hundred pounds a year out of the estate, and also of leaving one hundred pounds to a

convalescent home. The lawyer is amused but touched as well. “You are a ridiculous couple,” he tells them, “but don’t change, especially if you get on in the world.” “No fear,” is the light-hearted answer from both.

Twenty years later they are in the same room again for the same purpose, to make a new will disposing of an estate of seventy thousand pounds. Philip Ross is now one of the rising merchants of London. His wife, a woman of forty, sure of herself, not so much dressed, says Barrie, as “richly upholstered,” has come on her own initiative to see that her husband does “nothing foolish.” There is a hot-worded war over the husband’s determination to leave his wife a life interest in the estate instead of outright possession. Each refers to it as “my money.” The old tender solicitude which the lawyer had found at once so ridiculous and charming is gone. “One would think you were afraid of my marrying again,” she reproaches him. “One would think you were looking for my dying,” he angrily retorts. The allowance to the elderly cousins in poverty is at her instance reduced from one hundred to fifty pounds. She objects to his leaving a thousand pounds to a hospital as

unnecessary, but he clings to a bequest of five hundred pounds, because he wants to make a "splash in hospitals."

On the last visit Sir Philip Ross, now knighted, comes alone. His wife is dead and he comes to cancel all previous wills, especially for the purpose of cutting off without a penny his two children. The son has proved a "rotter," to use the father's own term, and the daughter has run away and married against his wishes. He starts to dictate to the lawyer. "I leave it—leave it—my God! I don't know what to do with it." Then in a fit of swelling anger he shouts to the lawyer, "Here are the names of the half dozen men I've fought with most for gold, and I've beaten them. Draw up my will leaving all my money to be divided among them, with my respectful curses, and I'll sign it."

One of the minor characters in the first scene is an old clerk in the office, who has just been told by his physician that he has an incurable cancer. He repeats to his employer the doctor's comment about it. "There is a spot of that kind in pretty near all of us, and if we don't look out it does for us in the end. He calls it the accursed thing, and I think he

meant we should know of it and be on the watch.” This reference to a cancer spot Barrie uses most effectively at the end of the story as a fine and delicate symbolism for Greed.

Barrie did not write this searching parable for millionaires. They face, no doubt in complicated and excessive form, a peril of riches that Jesus ever pointed out. It is a sickness of the soul whose risk of infection we cannot avoid by the simple means of failing to amass wealth; it is one of the common ills whose risk all flesh is heir to.

We are amazed, when we look into it, at the number of the words of Jesus which deal with the getting and spending of wealth. They form so large a part of the body of his teaching as almost to suggest a lack of a proper sense of proportion in the writers of the Gospels. But nothing else stands as clearer evidence that he knew what was in man.

One of the great pictures on the walls of the Boston Public Library is Abbey's rich and colorful painting of Sir Galahad's fight with the Seven Deadly Sins. Murder, lust, intemperance, and the flagrant passions of the flesh in their onslaught against the soul, are nobly

delineated. But the picture of the deadly sins as Jesus draws it in the Gospels is a very different one. To him the deadliest sins were those of the disposition, the cold hardness of greed, unteachable pride, and selfish unbrotherliness. These sins are more incurable because they are less easily discovered. Any man knows when he has been drunk, but who is able to place his finger on the moment when the miasma of covetousness touches him? The sins of the mind and disposition wreck the very means by which guilt can be determined. The light, which should show the darkness, becomes darkness itself.

A writer in Harper's Weekly in commenting on Barrie's play said if only a man would arise who could make Barrie's preachment effective and really rid our lives of greed, he would be the great liberator whom all the world waits to acclaim.

Why wait?

"Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, We have found him." The Messiah is here, the liberator from greed, who can train us to overcome evil with the positive good of a life which radiates from a living center of love.

XXII

“DUTCH COURAGE”

ALL the explosions in the great world war have been of shrapnel or torpedoes. Hoary ideas have gone up with a bang. The explosion of many of the time-honored delusions must be set down to the credit side of the staggering tragedy which has made the month of August, 1914, forever memorable. The eloquent argument of the sufficiency of commerce as an insurance of world peace will never again impose on the childlike credulity of millions of people. It has been blasted into a million fragments. Nor will the world ever rest its hope in the progress of “culture” as a guarantee of humanity. Like Humpty Dumpty it has fallen never to rise again.

Not least among these happy explosions has been the passing of the tradition of alcohol as an aid to military efficiency. While most of the words of the New Testament seem to have been buried clear out of sight, one of them has dawned on the governments of

Europe as never before—"If thine hand offend thee, cut it off." Both despotism and democracy have made a ruthless war on intoxication. In the field, particularly, the ancient faith of many commanders in the value of "Dutch courage," which term denotes the artificial bravado created by semi-intoxication, has been wholly discounted. This is a war of the trenches, in which victory depends not on the sudden charge of half-crazed men, but on the long endurance and sure marksmanship of the gunners. One of the last public utterances of Lord Roberts, was that in his judgment eight tenths of the value of a soldier depended on his efficiency as a shot. This is a field where the "courage" induced by alcohol is ruinous. The war is being fought by sober men. Deeper and more lasting sources of courage than that of the distillery have been sought and found.

This newer philosophy of the culture of courage is highly significant for all other aspects of life. "Dutch courage," or the false daring and bravado, created either by stimulants or by false views of life which act like intoxicants, is miserably insufficient for the long run where victory turns on endurance.

The life that wins is not a Charge of the Light Brigade, but an inch-by-inch campaign in trenches, and its lasting “nerve” must come from the deepest springs.

Intoxicants and drugs furnish a deceptive and abnormal courage for many. They are “brave” for the battle in the pathetic manner of Tam o’Shanter :

Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O’er all the ills of life victorious.

Poor Tam! It was the kind of courage that always oozes out at the finger tips. Men nerve themselves for some particular effort with what they call a “pick-me-up,” only to find it a “throw-me-down” at the critical time. We have gone far when we have learned that nature does not relish any jokes played on the nervous system. The terrible revenge of nature against the “jokes” of artificial stimulation is that finally the system fails to respond at all.

Rosy and superficial views of life are the means by which a “fighting front” is maintained by others. They overcome evil by the deliciously simple expedient of the ostrich—looking the other way. Christian Science

keeps its devotees keyed up by denying the existence of evil. New Thought tells us to keep our mind so occupied with pink and yellow thoughts that the ugly black and blue ones can never hurt us. Both of them make as satisfactory equipment for the realities of life as a picnic lunch would be for a six-months' campaign.

Mere motion is another common resort for keeping up the spirits. Only keep life spinning fast enough with different things and all will be well. Thoughtlessness is made the measure of its buoyancy. An old and battered top will look a bright red so long as it is spinning fast; only when it stops does its real dinginess appear. So an artificial thoughtlessness due to mere activity often passes for "the red badge of courage."

Lasting valor for the long campaign comes only from within. The secret of it is in that word in the Psalms, "I have nourished thee from the great depths."

The consciousness of the presence and power of God is necessary for true courage. "Had it not been for thee, my soul had dwelt in silence." The Cardinal Legate at Augsburg said to Luther, "Do you expect your princes

to take up arms to defend a wretched worm like you? I tell you, No! And where will you be then?” Luther calmly replied, “Right where I am now, in the hands of Almighty God.”

The possession of truth is an unfailing spring. Make our lives part of the truth and purpose which is larger than our personal aims, and we destroy the paralyzing hesitation of self-consciousness. The heroic valor of the trenches of northern France, on both sides, came from the feeling in the breasts of the men that they were part of a larger and more glorious thing than themselves—the nation. When we can say truly, “To this end am I come, that I might bear witness to the truth,” we have the spirit which enabled the Master to face the power of Rome itself without a quiver.

Love of men completes courage. It was the large source of the fearlessness of Jesus. He believed so deeply in men, loved so strongly the *best* that was in them, that he was never afraid of their *worst*. When we really love men we are delivered from the fear of acting for their best good.

XXIII

HIGH-HANDED TYRANNY

TYRANNY has never been popular in America. "When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security." These are the glowing words of the Declaration of Independence. The spirit of the men who risked their lives in signing that document has been bred into the very bone of later generations. We have kept the form and, to a very large degree, the substance of that protest against absolutism. But of late the national conscience has been deeply stirred by the evidences of what is known as "invisible government." Under the forms of the popular will there has developed a malign and unseen machinery of "influence" which has exerted a guiding hand on legislation. We have been called to a fresh crusade for some kind of a

“new freedom” from the domination of large vested interests, to reestablish the reality as well as the forms of popular government, a crusade which is perhaps the most hopeful movement of our time.

To bring it ultimate success we need an assertion of freedom that runs far deeper than the freeing of legislation. The worst kind of invisible government of a people is that which is still more “invisible” than the manipulations of a large trust. It is the subtle and insidious high-handed tyranny of popular ideals and commercial standards which throw around the moral and spiritual independence of the individual a shackling despotism. It consists of such intangible elements as ways of looking at things and standards of value, but which, like the unseen pull of gravitation, are powerful in concrete results.

There is a far extended *tyranny of bigness* which infects the spirit with the deadly sureness of the typhoid germ. G. W. Stevens, in his book of incisive comment on America, *The Land of the Dollar*, tells of having a creamer explained to him. “‘It is not yet finished,’ the owner was saying, ‘but when it is, I anticipate’—I shuddered, for I knew what was com-

ing—"it will be the best and the largest in the world." When shall I ever escape this tyranny of the biggest thing in the world?" Such tyranny shows in the practical acceptance of the idea, whether the bald theory would be agreed to or not, that the quantity of an action, a business or result of any kind, somehow makes up for its quality. W. J. Bryan says there are three kinds of larceny—petty larceny, grand larceny, and glorious larceny. "Glorious larceny" is thieving on such a large scale that its brilliant success atones for its moral crookedness. The popular acclaim which mere bigness wins trickles down into the minds of multitudes who are acting on a much smaller scale and gives values a pernicious twist. In The Turmoil Booth Tarkington has put the creed of the rampant and dingy commercialism of a Western city in this form:

Give me of Thyself, O Bigness;
Power to get more Power;
Riches to get more Riches;
Give me of thy sweat to get more sweat.
Give me of thy Bigness to get more Bigness for
myself,
O Bigness, for thine is the Power and the Glory
And there is no end but Bigness, for ever and ever.

"The new Freedom" most devoutly to be desired is that quality in man which declines to be overawed by conventional greatness and goes ahead and does its individual best, without making the silent surrender of quality to size.

Hurry is a ruthless tyrannizer. We have barely begun to recover from an era of wasteful pioneering when men were in such a hurry to secure the land and use it that all thought of conserving anything for future use was forgotten. The attitude to posterity was that of Sir Boyle Roche, who said in the House of Commons: "Why should we care for posterity? What has posterity done for us?" The subway guard tells us in the morning to "Step lively!" and we listen to the request to "Hurry up!" most of the day. The examples we see urge it. The things which can be done quickly, the quick profit, the immediate reputation, the pleasure that can be seized rather than waited for—all these assume the largest proportions and appear as the finest prizes. It is a sad tyranny, for it obscures the truth that the finest things in life are never won in a hurry. It takes time to achieve a fine friendship, to mold a character or to build up the materials

of a lasting happiness. The best things in a forest are not its mushrooms but its oaks, and the best in the heart must grow.

The squeeze of the crowd flattens out individuality by its despotic demand for conformity. It instills a mean terror of singularity. There is a kind of nervous affection known to medicine as agoraphobia—the fear of open places. The person afflicted with it has an ineradicable aversion to standing alone, away from people or the shelter of some building. What ravages the “fear of open places” has wrought in life, where one’s convictions would lead him to cut across the accepted customs of his associates! The right gives place to the “popular.” Professor John C. van Dyke has described the degeneration of a colorist in the field of art. He says that the painter finds out that “toned-down, washed-out, and faded colors are easier to harmonize than fresher ones, and where he formerly thought to win by affirmation, he makes his color negative or neutral and strives that it shall not offend.” “Toned-down, washed-out, and neutral colors” are sadly flapping from the rigging of many a life once bravely decked out with the positive hues of conviction.

You have read the Declaration of Independence and are proud of it. Have you ever made one of your own? Emerson says, "To every young man or woman the world puts the same question, 'Wilt thou become one of us?' and the soul in each of them answers heartily, 'No!' The world has no interest so deep as to cherish that resistance."

XXIV

A HAIR-TRIGGER CONSTITUTION

PROBABLY no one has given a better description of the temperament we all know only too well, and describe as a "hair-trigger constitution," than Lord Macaulay. Writing of Lord Glengarry, a Scotchman of the time of Dundee's Rebellion, he says, "He was one of those persons who think it dignified to imagine that other people are always insulting them." We call them "touchy," "thin-skinned," "sensitive," sometimes with a skin so tender that it responds to any allusion that can be construed into a personal reflection, with all the immediacy of an open blister. "Get the facts first," says Mark Twain in "My First Lie," "and then you can distort them as you please." Most any fact can be distorted by the man with a hair-trigger constitution into a grievous personal thrust at himself. The root of the malady is in a self-consciousness that never sleeps. It is doomed, like a ghost, to continually walk, alive and alert. The family crest,

appropriately hanging over many an office desk might well be the old flag of the Green Mountain Boys in the Revolution, with its coiled serpent and the legend, "Don't tread on me!" The most general observations are marvelously distilled into particular and personal remarks. In a very different sense from that applied by Shakespeare to the poet, they "give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name."

Sometimes we apply the term "hair-trigger" not only to a sensitive vanity, but also to a general irritability which is ready to explode at a moment's notice. A gentleman in Indiana has compounded a substance called Mitchelite, which is claimed to be the most powerful explosive known. But it may be doubted whether its tendency to ignite without overdue persuasion may not be matched and over-matched by many human parallels. Such a nervous tension is not by any means the product of modern times, but it has been vastly augmented and specialized by the city's speed and din. A good deal of the saltpeter in the human constitution comes from the jangle and jar of the crowd. "Do you count the sheep jumping over a fence?" a man suffering from insomnia was asked. "No," he answered. "I

count the automobiles as they whiz by." The reply puts the whole change of a generation in a nutshell. All the myriad kinds and degrees of "whizzes" tend to the upbuilding of the hair-trigger constitution.

Such a temperament wonderfully adds to the minor earthquakes of life. Yet there is a cardinal place in the scheme of things for the "touchy" person. Touchiness may be made of splendid use, not by being obliterated directly, but by being focused at a new point. Jesus was the "touchiest" person who ever lived. There is a sensitiveness and an alertness which is a divine grace, as well as that which is a human fault, and each continually asks the same question, "Who touched me?" Only one with a "hair-trigger" personality would ever have felt the mute appeal of the suffering woman in the crowd who put forth her hand to touch the hem of His garment. Jesus was instantly alive to the smallest disturbance in his environment. Such disturbance did not touch his vanity, for he had none. It unerringly struck something deeper—his sympathy. There was no more miraculous quality about him than a sympathy which not only goes out to the multitude, but so acutely alert and

quick that it could pick out the one needy woman from the crowd as deftly as the magnet picks up the piece of steel from other matter. We may well add to the common complaint of the traditional portrait of Christ, that it utterly misses his strength, this other lack, that it necessarily fails to convey the alertness, the *qui vive*, which was always with him.

Such a "touchiness" as was Christ's, his "tangibility" we might say, is always one of the world's greatest needs. So easily, much of our daily walk, so far as ability to imagine need and quickness to respond to it are concerned, becomes a sort of sleep-walking. The "hair-trigger" quality of Christ's sympathy comes partly from two qualities which can be reproduced—alertness and dramatic power. Like the vanity of the man who so easily finds slights, the sympathy of Jesus was always on "field duty," reaching out for the barest possibility of its exercise. Lack of alertness subtracts largely from the possible blessing bestowed by even the tenderest heart. It must not only have something to give stored away but the dispatch of a trigger to move it.

We fail often, too, through lack of exercise of dramatic power. True sympathy calls for

the art of making a swift and veracious picture of a person or situation. Whatever dramatic power one may have or develop will be more largely and fruitfully utilized in the path of Christian discipleship than in any other sphere on earth. Sympathy, so far from being a weak and mushy sentimentalism, is the most intellectual operation a man may engage in. It calls for seeing and understanding all the elements in a situation and putting himself lovingly in imagination in the midst of them. The Christian who responds with heart and brain to the varied and complex needs of others has composed a library of dramas, as he makes their situation live before him.

The negative virtue of the "hair trigger" man is that he is abnormally awake. It may be transformed into a rare instrument of power by changing its focus.

XXV

THE LATEST THING

WHEN G. Lowes Dickinson made his first visit to America he came to the conclusion that the dominant national passion was for wealth. On his second visit he revised that judgment as being superficial and decided that the great ambition was not so much for wealth as for power. On his last visit, however, he concluded that the ruling passion was neither for wealth nor for power, but for acceleration. There are moments when the simple process of crossing the street leads us all to agree with him.

There are also moments when our observation would lead us to set up alongside of acceleration as an ideal which holds a wide and growing sway, the passion for novelty, the desire to be sure that one is doing, seeing, wearing, or thinking—the Latest Thing.

John Galsworthy, in his book of bright and sharp, but not bitter, satires, *The Little Man*, has drawn an exquisite portrait of a woman

whose life was a chase of the Latest Thing, showing the mental vacuum which was always regarded by her as "living her life to the full." Nearly every line of his keen description suggests traits which are easily recognizable as old acquaintances. "To look at a thing," he says of this Passionate Pilgrim of the New, "without possessing it was intolerable, but to keep it after she had got it was even more so. She had flung open all the doors of life and was so continuously going out and coming in, that life had considerable difficulty in catching a glimpse of her at all." She was "a mere perpetual glancing from quick-sliding eyes, to see the next move, to catch a new movement, God bless it!" She swam "on the full deep river of sensations, nibbling each other's tails. To say that she had her favorite books, plays, men, dogs, colors, was to do her but momentary justice. A deeper equity assigned her only one favorite, the Next, and for the sake of that one favorite, no Catherine, no Semiramis, no Messalina, could more swiftly depose all the others. Life, she thought, must be so dull for the poor creatures doing one thing at a time and that for so long."

In one sentence of his description, Gals-

worthy touches the real destructiveness of the enthronement of novelty as the ruling passion. "Life was so full that the moment it stood still, and was simply old life, it seemed to be no life at all." There is one passage as full of spiritual understanding as it is of delicious satire: "Once in a new book she came across a tale of a man who 'lived' in Persia, of all heavenly places, frantically pursuing sensation. Entering, one day, the courtyard of his house, he heard a sigh behind him, and looking around, saw his own spirit, apparently in the act of breathing its last. The little thing, dry and white, was opening and shutting its mouth for all the world like an oyster trying to breathe. 'What is it?' he said. 'You don't seem well.' And his spirit answered: 'It's all right, it's all right. Don't distress yourself. It's nothing. I've been crowded out, that's all.' And with a wheeze, the little thing went flat." "The moon," Galsworthy concludes, "was as yet the only thing which had eluded her avidity, that—and her own soul."

We see this quest at the top of the social ladder in the American woman in Paris who offers a prize of five thousand dollars to any one who will invent a really new social

“stunt.” We see it daily in the most ordinary spheres. Owen Wister tells of a lady who went into the Public Library in Philadelphia and asked the librarian to recommend a book. He gave her one, but she looked at the title page in disgust. “Why, this is a year old,” she said. “Give me something new.” So he handed her one that had just been laid that day by Robert W. Chambers. We see it in the folks who follow the call of “off with the old love, on with the new,” and whose friendships, in the words of Douglass Jerrold, “are so warm, that they no sooner take them up than they must lay them down again.” Most sadly do we see it in the numbers who rarely ever follow through any helpful piece of service, before they are lured away by some new will-o’-the-wisp.

The cult of the Latest Thing makes *superficial* people. The real satisfaction and value of our experiences do not come in the doorways and porches, but in the living rooms; in the things we know well enough and have worked at long and patiently enough to obtain their real reward. That only final source of happiness, character, never comes from a sight-seeing tour, but from the settled proc-

esses of work and home. The hunt of the Latest Thing yields only shells. Dr. Cabot has cleverly parodized some lines from "The Village Blacksmith":

Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,
So I my life conduct.
Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees it chucked.

It makes irresponsible people. The work of the world cannot be done by jumping-jacks, and its working capital of hope and courage and love has an old-fashioned way of being little affected by whether a thing is novel or not. "The first quality of a soldier," said Thiers, "is constancy in enduring fatigue and privation. Valor is only the second." The warfare of the Kingdom depends on the same first quality.

There are many roads to *monotony*, but the surest and most direct is the quest of the Latest Thing. Real novelty in life is always an inner freshness and never an outward change. The person whose faithfulness in individual and social service yields him the glory of seeing new growth in the personality of others, lives always in a new world. No life

on earth ever teemed with such startling novelties as did that of Jesus. He saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. "I have meat to eat that ye know not of."

XXVI

OVER THE WALL

“By my God have I leaped over a wall.”

IN these words David at the zenith of his career as king at Jerusalem recalls the athletic buoyancy of his boyhood days on the Bethlehem hills. His heart returns in the fullness of his years to the free life of the shepherd boy with its

leaping from rock up to rock,
The strong rending of boughs from the fir tree, the cool
silver shock
Of a plunge in the pool's living water.

As his mind lovingly returns to that life of the hills, it occurs to him that the old acrobatic leap of his boyhood is a figure large enough to express the divine romance of his providential career. His has been a strange history, successively surmounting walls that rose up before him and overshadowed his spirit, and he gratefully recognizes that it has been by his God that he has leaped over them. If

we will glance at three swiftly moving pictures in the life of this king, we will find that the words are not only large enough to give us the secret of David's life, but may afford a true transcript of any spiritual history.

The first is the dark picture of the man hedged in by the walls of a great sin. The man after God's own heart is overshadowed by the black murder done at the dictates of passion. We rarely see the real nature of sin so clearly as in David, a man so responsive to spiritual impressions, so full of the riches of heart's affection, so strong, so much of a genius, so steadily ascending in power and character! What a dismal anticlimax his sin was!

It would only have been in line with innumerable life tragedies if, in his remorse, he had thought of himself as fallen like Lucifer, never to rise again. That is so often the history, an aspiring upward path and then a drop into a deep well. And they accept the fall. How many spiritual histories could be told in the couplet of George Macdonald—

There came a mist and a blinding rain,
And life was never the same again.

But David did not stay in the pit. By his

God he leaped over the wall. Read that interview with Nathan and its searching conviction, "Thou art the man," and then that marvelous prayer of penitence, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." Quick as a flash—the word is poor, for no flash ever went off so quickly as the movement of God's heart to true repentance—God answers, "I have forgiven thee."

The great thing about the sin of David was that it was a parenthesis. It was not a full stop, and after the break in the story the thread of grace is taken up again. David did not leap over the wall of sin by merely saying, "That was a bad mistake; I must do better in the future." We know how little that avails. We cannot lift ourselves out of the pit by our own boot-straps. We conquer sin, not by taking thought but by taking God, and are lifted from the mire by the strong cords of a forgiving, redeeming love.

The second picture is a brighter one. It is in the cave where his enemy, Saul, is sleeping in David's power. Between them the towering walls of antipathy, dislike, and fear have risen up as barriers, and the swift thought of the sword as an easy way to end it all rushes into

David's mind. But he escapes by bringing into their relation the thought of God. This man Saul, this man that he does not like and with good reason, is still the Lord's anointed, still has claims on his consideration.

What a high and strong leap this overcoming of the walls of resentment and prejudice is, we all know. Racial, social, and personal barriers to our sympathy rise up on every hand. Samuel Johnson said a very typical thing when he declared that "he could like everybody except an American." We all have our own Bills of Exceptions. It was Scotchmen with Charles Lamb, whom he said he had been trying to like all his life without any success. We say we can work with any one *except* this particular person or that. "He gets on our nerves." We do not often overcome our imperfect sympathies by a reasoned process. We leap over the wall of dislike and exclusion only as David did, by getting a God's eye view of the other man. It was only when the early church learned with Paul to see in the condemned Gentile and the barbarian without the law the brothers for whom Christ died that it was welded into that conquering union which knew neither bond nor free,

Scythian nor Barbarian. No matter what may be the extent of our estate or what mansions we may erect, we shall never succeed in building anything but a little prison house for our spirits unless we get the divine view of human relationships.

The last picture is a sublime one. The little child of David has died. But he refuses to accept as final the dark walls of death. He maketh the magnificent leap of faith in immortality. "He shall not come to me, but I shall go to him." It is not the perfect faith as we know it in the New Testament. David did not have the ladder of Christ by which to make the surer climb. But it is probably the fairest foregleam of immortality to be found in the Old Testament.

In the shadow of that same wall of death we have all sat before; there we shall all sit again. And no matter how far we have advanced in spiritual knowledge over the days of Israel's kings, it is still a leap of faith by which we get into the sunlight of hope and comfort. It even seems a longer leap to some to-day because of the many newly disclosed ties, showing our physical relationship to the other creatures. In the Museum of Natural

History in New York city there is a striking series of the skeletons of the primates, arranged in the order of their ascent. At the head of the list there is a skeleton of a man, bearing a certain number, by its inclusion in that collection seeming to tell us: "Here *you* are. A little better than the other apes, a little more intelligent, more long-lived and adaptable. That is all."

All? No! Faith says, "I accept the horizontal lines that show my physical affinities to the other creatures of earth; but I see and hold to the vertical line that runs upward, binding me as a child to an infinite Father, in whose heart I have an eternal worth." Faith says with Paul, "O death, where is thy sting?" It says with Ruskin, "Why should we wear black for the guests of God?"

XXVII

CLOUDING THE ISSUE

IN all the catalogue of political tricks there is no form of cleverness which brings larger returns than skill in "clouding the issue." This art carries an argument by discussing something distantly related to it and succeeds in making the whole thing turn on a point which has little or nothing to do with it. Millions of unsophisticated citizens have voted to have the city treasury looted by a gang of thieves because the scheme was cleverly draped with the national flag while the band played "The Star-Spangled Banner." We may smile at the Carolina mountaineer who came up to the polling booth a few years ago to cast his ballot for Jefferson Davis; but it is not quite so amusing to think that there are large numbers of people who vote the Republican or Democratic ticket at strictly local elections because of their admiration of Lincoln or their reverence for the memory of the late Thomas Jefferson. This is the high art of the liquor

propagandist who seeks to cloud the question of the moral and economic curse of the saloon with the specious issue of "personal liberty."

Looked at in view of all of its consequences, this guileless "innocence" of allowing the judgment to be confused by things irrelevant, is a deadly form of sin. The cleverness which causes it is part of that strategy which makes up the largest part of the destructive power of all sin, its ingenuity of disguise. It is an ingenuity which dates from Eden, and everything new to be said about it was old centuries ago. It is a question, however, whether the old pitfall of the disguises and fictions of sin does not merit a freshened attention because of a sure growth of softening the asperities of life in the language used in the social and business world.

Whatever may be the reason, whether from an advance in politeness or a more adroit salesmanship, old-fashioned plain and harsh words are giving place to more subdued and inviting ones. What used to be called "cast-off" clothing is advertised and sold as "slightly used"—a much more mild and agreeable term. Instead of the old term "boarders" we see frequent advertisements which refer

to "table guests." Who ever hears of a second-hand typewriter now? It is always a "rebuilt machine." The clerk in the department store is instructed never to ask if the buyer wishes something "cheaper." She deftly suggests "something less expensive"—a much more flattering way of saying the same thing. When a man is sick we learn that he is "indisposed." The old-fashioned cabinet photograph which etched our features with pitiless truth has given place to the "art study" which endows us all with the distinction of beauty.

That all this makes for pleasantness no one can deny. But with the glossing over of hard and plain names of things in the minor departments of life, there is the very real danger of transferring the same pleasant process to its major departments and ending up with toning down the asperities of sin. There is danger of a kind of moral "aphasia," which malady consists in being unable to remember the right names of things. And "that way lies madness." It is hard enough at the best. The same thing which is "stubbornness" in another is usually labeled "firmness" when it appears in ourselves. The "stinginess" of some one else is only "prudence" when we act the same

way. And the same words which on the other fellow's tongue show "cowardice," on our own are an instance of a "wise caution."

The strategy of sin has won its battle when it gets us to call it by another name. One of the most perfect pictures of the strategy of sin is the story in the book of Joshua, of the device of the Gibeonites who wished to form, for their own advantage, an alliance with Israel. Israel had been forbidden to make alliances of any kind, and the ambassadors of the Gibeonites put forward three pleas to show why this alliance with them could do no harm. These three pleas voice in absolutely perfect form the three main strokes of sin in clouding the issue. They said:

1. "*We are come from a far country.*" This was the ingratiating start. "There can be no evil consequences, for we live so far away." So speaks the voice of every temptation from that of Eve down to the one we met an hour ago. The danger seems remote, chimerical. Others might possibly be harmed but not *us*.

2. "*We are come on account of Jehovah, your God.*" Here is diplomacy of the highest order. Temptation never suggests that we part with our religion. It whispers that there

is no real antagonism between our religion and the course suggested. Unthinkable! It will even help Jehovah! There is hardly any sin whose real character cannot be clouded with a religious motive. When a fresh ship-load of slaves from Africa was unloaded at Newport in colonial days the minister publicly rendered fervent thanks to God for his providence in "bringing these benighted blacks under the blessed influence of the gospel." He probably deceived every one—including himself—except the Almighty.

3. "*We are your servants.*" Here was the oily culmination. Temptation comes as opportunity. It is the chance of a lifetime for knowledge, power, advancement, all of which, of course, will be put to a fine use!

The Israelites learned that all this golden eloquence boiled down finally into one "short and ugly word." They were lies. Sin is always *near* in its results; it is *atheistic*; it never serves but always *rules*.

"The approach to Constantinople reveals the most beautiful city in the world. The glamour and romance of the East become for the moment realities. But presently the onlooker begins to lose the *ensemble*. The forms of the

buildings become grotesque; the streets grow squalid and the people and dogs make up a mean and hideous entanglement of life." A fair picture of the refractions of sin. The only sure method of correcting them is the daring of Joshua's dealing with the unknown angel, to demand, clear down to the end of every serpentine coil of reasoning, "Art thou for us or for our enemies?"

XXVIII

THE FALLACY OF PREPARATION

IN one of the earlier chapters of her autobiography, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, Miss Jane Addams describes the mood of dissatisfaction which came over her at the end of the year of European study, following her college course. It was the indefinite feeling of being tired of spending such a long time in preparing for a work which was not as yet clearly defined or indicated. She says that she felt as though she had made the discovery of a practical fallacy which was not mentioned in the time-honored list in the books of logic—the fallacy of preparation. By that expression she denotes the danger of missing many of the opportunities of life while engaged on the praiseworthy business of preparing for them, and especially missing that finest part of preparation that comes only through active service.

It is a noteworthy phrase—the fallacy of

preparation. In these days of scientific efficiency and specialization in business and professions and social and religious work as well, there is not much danger of the importance of training being lost sight of. But there is always danger of our making the lack of training or waiting for an ideal completeness of preparation an excuse for failing to seize the immediate opportunities of service which are at hand, and which are very likely to prove the best our lives will ever afford.

No career that comes to mind affords quite so complete an instance of the working of this fallacy as does that of General George B. McClellan. The Army of the Potomac needed first of all a drill-master and McClellan filled that requirement to a supreme degree. Yet, while appreciating that need, he swung to the other extreme of waiting for that readiness which in his mind would justify an engagement, and the judgment of military history is that some of the most strategic opportunities of the war rushed by while he waited. General Meade said of him, "He was always waiting to get everything just as he wanted before he would attack, and before he could get things arranged just as he wanted them the enemy

pounced on him and thwarted all his plans. There is now no doubt that he allowed three distinct occasions to take Richmond to slip through his hand for want of nerve to run what he considered risks." He could never rid himself of the delusion that the enemy's force was far greater than his own, and the actual figures always proved him wrong. His constant complaint in the Peninsular campaign was his lack of men, when the records later showed that against his one hundred thousand men Lee had an army of only sixty-three thousand.

Life can be wasted in drilling just as sadly as in open profligacy. "We refuse sympathy and intimacy with people," writes Emerson, "as if we waited for some better sympathy and intimacy to come. But whence and where? To-morrow will be like to-day. Life wastes itself while we are preparing to live." The real truth of the matter, so easily lost sight of, is that preparation and achievement can never be wholly separated. Each is a part of the other.

In the service of the Kingdom, holding oneself aloof from its tasks while waiting for some vague, ideal readiness has wrought incalcu-

lable loss. We do well to wish to be workmen needing not to be ashamed. It is well to refuse to offer to the Master only the tattered remnants of our time and attention. The old question of David should never be forgotten: "Shall I offer to the Lord that which cost me nothing?" But it is just as important to ponder the deep meaning of Jesus's injunction to the hanger back: "Let the dead bury the dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." We wait for *time* before we are ready to do this or that, forgetting that time for any unselfish service is never an accident, but always a creation. We wait for some other *place*, under the superstition that we shall find that ideal condition which shall justify our efforts; whereas the one truth which several moves bring home to the mind is not so much that all places are alike, for that is not true, but that to a large extent we carry our own place with us, and that our own attitude and disposition are the most determining parts of our environment. We wait for the right *mood*, some sparkling hour of inspiration which shall sweep us on, forgetting that the high moods of victory and daring come only on the invitation of toil.

"Some day—but not to-day,
I mean to put these trifles all away,
And arm myself for manhood's nobler fray,
To throttle wrong and baffle greed,
And pour my life out to my brother's need,
Some day—but not to-day.

"It is so hard, just now!
Another time I shall have learned just how,
Deliberation will my speech endow
With that one warm, persuasive word."
Ah! Hesitator, have you never heard,
There is no time but now?

XXIX

THE CREATIVE INFLUENCES OF THE CHURCH

THERE is a world of difference between the manifestations of any movement and its creative influences. This would seem to be so obvious a truth as to make its frequent restatement superfluous were it not for the universal fact that the one is easily mistaken for the other. The person who is accurately described as a classicist or traditionalist is one who makes this mistaken identification and becomes so attentive to the local manifestations of a movement that he removes himself from the influences which have created it.

That was the mistake of the Pharisees, whose case Jesus summed up in the sentence, "You make void the law through your tradition." There are no ironies of history more striking than those of the followers of great movements who, through a mistaken loyalty to some of its temporary forms, make it stand for the very things against which it was originally launched in protest. We see it in

the case of great political parties, which began as associations of high-spirited innovators, becoming the bulwark of the selfish and reactionary interests of the political world. In another sphere we see it in some who would gladly transform, and through a sense of loyalty too, so radical a movement as Methodism, which began as an uncompromising protest in the interest of spiritual freedom, a daring venturing forth into new fields, into a lifeless code of ironclad rules and unvarying customs.

A few years ago there was a gigantic explosion of dynamite on the New Jersey side of New York bay. It shattered thousands of windows in Manhattan and even broke dishes in Brooklyn, fifteen miles away. All the fire engines in the lower part of New York came out and raced helplessly up and down the streets looking for the cause of the damage. They found plenty of manifestations of the explosion, but did not discover the cause, for that was miles out of their reach.

The creative influences of the church as opposed to the resultant forms of that influence are equally far to seek. Gibbon, in the classic chapter in which he attempts to explain

the reasons for the success of Christianity, its organization, zeal, charity, etc., only puts his hand on results which themselves require to be accounted for. He never enters the realm of final causes at all.

In a real sense the final creative influences of the church will never be comprehended by the human mind. "Behold, I show you a mystery." They lie buried in the unsearchable riches of Christ, the central mystery of the universe, that God is love. We never find the final source of any great river such as the Amazon or the Mississippi till we look for it in the clouds. But at the head of every river there are certain earthly beginnings in the form of small eternal springs, from which the little stream trickles out to find its glorious destiny. So, as one explores about that great seed plot of modern history, the book of Acts, he discovers definite forces which were the creators of the church and under whose living influence the disciple must ever keep himself.

A life through Christ is the real genius of the church, for which no knowledge, no tongues, no gifts, no achievements can ever be substituted. The Christian Church was first

of all a fellowship of experience. "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Here is the force that created—"It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." All the manifestations of the church, if not animated by that life-giving force, no matter what sacredness usage may throw around them, are sterile. There is a pathetic little letter written by Helen Keller to Phillips Brooks, when she was about twelve years old. "Tell me," she says, "something that you know about God." "Something you *know* about God"—the little blind girl spoke for the whole round world. As the same request was voiced from the mission field: "We do not want your adjectival Christianity; give us the substantive thing." All else that the church can give, lacking its personal experience, is sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. Generalization is risky, but it does not mean much risk to say that the periods in which the church has moved with conquering tread have been those in which this truth of the active presence

of God in the soul have been emphasized; and the epochs when it has languished have been those in which this truth has been obscured.

A brotherhood in Christ. The book of Acts is flooded with the golden glow of the dawning of a real democracy and brotherhood in Christ. Out of the scattered and repellent fragments, one living body of Christ was created. It is easy to accept the brotherhood of man as a dead or blunt truth, but it never becomes a creative force until we make earnest with its reality. It always means sacrifice. Its keen edge which the world feels is well shown in a letter which the Duchess of Buckingham wrote to Lady Huntingdon, regarding Whitefield and Wesley: "Their doctrines are most repulsive and strongly tinged with impertinence and disrespect to their superiors. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl the earth. This is highly insulting and I wonder that your Ladyship should relish any sentiments so much at variance with high rank and good breeding." In the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century England was recreated by the Christian democracy of the first century.

An urgency for Christ. "When he had seen the vision, immediately he endeavored to go." Through whatever changing forms it manifests itself, that urgency of Paul is always the soul of a real church. Samuel Johnson paid a high, though unintended compliment to John Wesley: "His conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He always has to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have his talk out as I do." John Wesley's legs were "unfolded" most of his ninety years. He had felt his Master's passion for souls and, like him, had not where to lay his head. When Captain Gracie, one of the survivors of the Titanic, died a year after the disaster, his last words were, "We must get them all into the lifeboats." That awful hour of the immanence of danger had stamped itself on his mind, never to be forgotten. The same degree of the vivid sense of the destructiveness of sin and the urgency of the good news of salvation lay at the heart of the first heralds of the cross.

XXX

WHICH KINGDOM?

THERE are some stories, familiar to the world for years, which yet retain the dew of their youth. One of these is the classic concerning the visit of the father of the present German emperor to a little country school-house. Conducting an impromptu examination, he asked a little girl to what kingdom a potato belonged and received the right answer—to the vegetable kingdom. In the same way he was told that a rock belonged to the mineral kingdom. Then, pointing to himself and asking the same question, he was delighted with the unexpected response that he belonged to the kingdom of God.

The answer was more correct than the “correct” one would have been. We do not grudge the repetition of the old story, for it is one of those flashes of spiritual understanding sometimes ordained from the mouths of babes. But it deserves far more than the ready and unthinking assent which we usually give

to it. It is always a pertinent question. After all, what kingdom *do* we belong to? The answer is not so obvious as it might seem.

When we look at the question in a fresh way, that goes down to the very bottom of the heart, we realize that we all know people who seem to have more real affinities to the *vegetable kingdom* than to any other. They live; they grow; they take from their environment things necessary for their sustenance; all the things which a fine garden vegetable does—and not a very great deal more. A few years ago one of the great capitalists of America died, a man known to the public mainly by three facts: he was worth more than fifty million dollars, he had never taken a vacation, and he lunched every day on an apple. One of the New York dailies, commenting on his career, said that he had probably gotten as much enjoyment out of life as a healthy vegetable. Which comment, while flavored with witty exaggeration, was headed in the direction of truth. Queen Elizabeth once asked the secretary of the House of Commons what passed during the session. He answered, wearily, "Seven weeks." To spend life merely in passing the time, however pleas-

antly, is truly called "vegetating." Such life has no returns from ventures of thought or investments of action. It goes "from thoughtless youth to ruminating age." Somewhere along in its latter half it always meets that very real tragedy which occurs when life takes on a dwindling aspect. Sydney Smith put it grimly when he said of a friend, "He spent all his life letting down empty buckets into empty wells, and now he is frittering away his age trying to draw them up again."

The brightest silver lining to the clouds of sorrow is the truth that God uses pain and misfortune to awaken us to a higher kingdom. Sorrow is usually his call, "Friend, come up higher." "I learn day by day," wrote Stevenson, on a sick bed, "the value and high doctrinality of suffering. Let me suffer always; not more than I can bear, for that drives men mad; but still to suffer some, and never to sink to the eyes in comfort and respectability." How many life histories are summed up in these words of Harriet Martineau: "But for the loss of our father's money, we might have lived on in the ordinary provincial method of ladies with small means, growing narrower every year; whereas, by being thrown on our

resources while it was yet time, we have worked hard and usefully, won friends and independence, seen the world abundantly abroad and at home, in short, have truly lived instead of vegetating."

Sometimes again men become so hard by the scramble of competition, so capable of resisting impression made by anything less soft and metallic than a coin, that they seem almost to belong to the *mineral kingdom*. They have the undeniable power of making their way that a bullet has and the same unyielding quality. It is a good thing on occasion to stand like a rock; it is a sad thing to become one.

We all belong to the *animal kingdom*, and it is not only a worthy ambition but a God-given duty to become the best animal of which we are capable. But it is a poor stopping point. On leaving a famous health resort in Germany a grateful patient wrote in the guest book,

Content return I from this blessed wood.
I found here health, life's highest, truest, good.

But a wiser man wrote beneath the lines:

That is not life's best good. That is but half.
Else were most blest a healthy little calf.

Once when Tennyson was looking at a portrait of a retired politician in his bland family aspect he made the observation, "He looks like a retired panther." There are some politicians to whom such assignment to the animal kingdom would have had more truth than simile.

In the *kingdom of God* every man, emperor and peasant, millionaire and clerk, belongs. "God is a Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth," has its corollary in the truth that man is a spirit, and only in the fellowship of his Father's life and purpose does he find his true sphere.

For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

The world of nature knows two kinds of forces—the gravitant forces, such as gravitation, and the radiant forces, such as electricity and radium. The man who belongs to the kingdom of God holds the gravitant forces of his life, its acquisitive and accumulative powers, under the domination of the radiant forces of love and service.

XXXI

“A MAXIM SILENCER FOR OLD WHEEZES”

“A MAXIM SILENCER FOR OLD WHEEZES” is the sparkling title of a recent article in the *Atlantic Monthly*. In it Mr. Seymour Deming gives us a list of soft and silencing answers with which to drown the endless and tiresome repetition of old worn out saws, particularly those that have to do with the economic and social questions. It would be a fine thing if we could have a similarly effective means presented for killing off the crystallized lies which masquerade as gems of thought in the moral and religious world. We are told in the New Testament to “try the prophets” before following them; and in this modern world it is just as well to “try” the epigrams as well. For the power for evil which is carried by a crisp looking popular epigram is unreckonable. By dint of endless repetition they get themselves believed among those who never challenge them, and by implying far more

than they assert they act as paralysis on action.

Hardly a day passes on which we are not informed that "*it takes all kinds of people to make a world.*" The trite saying is usually let drop with an air of having made a fresh contribution to the world's wisdom. This choice remark was given a high place in Gelett Burgess's celebrated list of "bromides" and with reason. Hardly any other piece of conversational small change is circulated with more frequency by the mentally indolent. It contains this much truth—that there are all kinds of people in the world, and, more than that, it takes different kinds of people to make an interesting world. But the "epigram" raises a mental fog which obscures moral distinctions. It apologizes for delinquencies as though honest men and thieves were as inevitable classes of men as short men and tall. This fog of shallow thinking is shown in the great popularity of this flabby quatrain, so often used as a wall motto:

There's so much bad in the best of us,
And so much good in the worst of us,
That it doesn't become any of us
To talk about the rest of us,

With the evil of gossiping we can all hasten to heartily agree. But the logical effect of the whole is to question seriously the value of moral effort and ends in the creeping paralysis of "What's the use?" The truth is, of course, that it takes only *one* kind of people to make the right kind of a world—the people whose lives under all varieties of temperament and circumstances are forces in establishing the kingdom of God.

If this lie has slain its thousands, its first cousin, "*It's not what you believe but what you do that counts,*" has slain its ten thousands. For through the medium of the post-card, the anæmic poetry of the daily press, and the thoughtless turning of human phonographs, this sentiment of the uselessness of belief has grown quite imposing and substantial. It has this coating of truth, of course, that an effectual belief always fulfills itself in deeds. But in the sense in which it is most widely quoted it contains as much wisdom as to say, "It doesn't make any difference what a farmer plants, it's what he grows that counts." This philosophy speaks daily to thousands in the following sweet and sickly lines:

So many paths, so many creeds,
So many words that wind and wind;
When all the poor old world needs
Is just the art of being kind.

How simple! The verse would lead us to suppose that the art of being kind were the most trifling matter in the world. There could not be a greater fallacy. The art of being persistently and intelligently kind is the most tremendous task to which the race ever set itself. We would stamp as an idiot the man who would muse, "So many clouds, so many rains, so many useless things in earth and sky, when all the world needs is more corn and wheat." To grow a stalk of wheat calls for the cosmic energies of the universe. And a life of effective kindness, in the same way, demands an endurance of will and loftiness of motive which will not grow in the top soil of sentimentalism but require a real and rational faith in God.

Another old saw which carries the terrifying club of an axiom is that valiant retainer of the liquor traffic and every interest that preys on men, "*You can't change human nature.*" Many folks, who would scorn to allow themselves to be browbeaten by a human

bully with a club, will meekly surrender when this blustering bit of nonsense appears. It is nonsense because it begs the whole question by assuming that human nature is a rigid, static thing in which the ignorance, the vices, and follies of men were ineradicably set. Human nature is a dynamic, living, growing thing, and "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." We cannot change an acorn, but we can mercilessly destroy conditions which forbid its development into the mighty, normal oak. Which is just what every effort for the betterment of humanity aims to do.

Saint Paul gave the advice in the first century, to "shun old wives' fables." If he were here to-day, he would surely let it stand.

XXXII

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS—REVISED

AMONG the curiosities of literature is Benjamin Franklin's revision of the Lord's Prayer. The same ignominious fate which was met by Franklin's attempt at improvement awaits anyone who would have the impertinence to lay a revising hand on *Pilgrim's Progress*. The book's timeless place is secured, if on no other score, by the approval of a timeless childhood. It has been a spring, never dry or intermitent, both of good diction and good deeds.

Accordingly, we have not the rashness of offering any revision of our own time. We venture only to suggest a revision which preceded the original work by some centuries, as a sort of preliminary footnote.

The one defect of Bunyan's immortal record for our day is its lack of social outlook. The story of one lone man battling his way from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City, however heroic it may be, is always a frag-

ment. If his solitary victory is all that is achieved, we may well ask, from the point of view of future pilgrims,

"But what good came of it at last?"

Quoth little Peterkin.

"Why, that I cannot tell," said he;

"But 'twas a famous victory."

After Pilgrim comes his wife, in the less known sequel, along the same way, to find not a stone rolled aside, bridge built, or forest cleared. It is a better Pilgrim's Progress which is suggested in the book of Proverbs, "The path of the righteous is made a highway." The ideal of a man who not only gets there himself, but who, as he goes, builds a road, levels a hill, is infinitely larger. Such an ideal brings to the detached romance of the adventurer the social service of the pioneer. The figure comes from the thought that the desert road on which the caravan moves with safety and ease was once the lonely hazard of one man over the uncharted waste.

Every broad highway on which we move was once a foot path. Out in Penn Valley Park, in Kansas City, beside the track of the Santa Fe Railroad, is a monument which marks the course of the old Santa Fe trail—

a mute but eloquent commentary on this truth. It is a tonic to the spirit to think of the great steel highway, along which international traffic plunges at the rate of fifty miles an hour, being once the daring and solitary wheel print of a "prairie schooner." It is true of the highway of the spirit as well. It is hard for us to imagine the time when liberty of conscience and speech was a new and daring heresy.

If every road was once a path, the converse is equally true, that every path becomes a road, and therein lies the inspiration for to-day's pilgrim. Glance swiftly at some of the stations passed by Bunyan's wayfarer, and notice how their bleak outlines blossom as the rose to the real life pilgrim who builds as he goes.

Hill Difficulty is on every path. The magnetism which there is in the mere hope of getting to the top is often too weak to urge on a heart that is heavier than lead. But add the prospect of laying a pavement, of driving a stake for the next man to pull up by, and it is a new road. It is just as hard, perhaps, but a lot more worth while. Christ began with the hill path. That new and living way by which we easily go to the heart of God was

first laid out by forty days of hard journeying in the wilderness of temptation. He made a Pilgrim's Progress for the hope which was set before him. He was strong to save because he was strong to suffer. It is always true. By the development of our own strength to serve, by our addition to the world's stock of hill-reducing examples, we lay paving stones on every hill we ascend.

Doubting Castle is less of a grim dungeon viewed in this light. Phillips Brooks says that very few men have helped others by a direct solving of their doubts, but that an innumerable company have made a way out of doubt for others by showing them the spectacle of one holding true his course of life when it was known that all doubts were not at rest. Tennyson was overwhelmed on his eightieth birthday by the expressions of love that came in from all parts of the world. "I do not know what I have done," he said, "that so many people should feel grateful to me except that I have always kept my faith in immortality." What an "all" it was! The stanzas of "In Memoriam" loom up like the girders of a great bridge from doubt to faith which has furnished sure footing for thousands.

Even the *Slough of Despond* grows its flowers. The noblest tribute ever paid to Pitt, finer than any that Macaulay or Lecky ever penned, was the remark of an infantry captain. "No one," he said, "ever went into his closet without coming out a braver man." The spectacle of Pitt making his way through Herculean tasks helped the soldier to face his own. Out of his own hard path Pitt made a common highway for the spirit of the nation.

Pioneer days in our national development exist only in books and memory. But in the religious and moral life road-building days never pass away. Wherever men and women are bravely meeting their own difficulties and conquering them we can hear the crash of the ax of the pioneer.

XXXIII

WASHING THE AIR

IN nearly every large city hospital there will be found a device for the startling but useful purpose of "washing the air." It is a jarlike receptacle which may be attached to any window, and through which the air is forced through water for purification, and set in motion by a fan. It catches the outdoor breezes, gives them a thorough shampoo, and dispenses them for needy nostrils. Even when the hospital is environed with a forest of smoke stacks, the air can be "washed" for safe and healing use.

The modest little jar at the hospital window is a graphic picture of the function of prayer in a life set against a grim and dusty background. There is no theater of an active, busy life whose atmosphere does not hold in solution dust and dirt that lodges in the mind and heart, obscuring vision and lowering vitality. Aims, standards, and practices not our own will lodge in the mind as surely as dust in the

lungs, unless the air we move in is continually charged with new life. The mediæval solution of this problem was to go where the air was free from contagious dust, necessarily arising from an evil world. The Christian solution is not to flee from the air, but to wash it; to pass it through what has been finely called the great alembic of God's will in prayer and to renew it through the transformation of the mind as a heart is lifted up into a new world and new air.

It is also true that the largest part of our service for others is the indirect one of clearing the atmosphere, "washing the air" in which they live, furnishing a medium in which their best may spontaneously spring up. The direct and immediate benefits we are able to give are largely confined to cases of exceptional intimacy, or a rare endowment of wisdom or means. We cannot assume direct charge or responsibility of another and expect to do much service by infallible advice or repeated exhortation. Such an attitude resembles too closely the one who would say, "I am Sir Oracle, and when I ope my lips let no dog bark!" We do most when our attitude and temperament induce a response, as pure

air, without alluding to its presence or purpose, builds up tissue.

Attach your spiritual device for washing the air to the window of a room which is full of strife, and what a new current circles through! "A soft answer turneth away wrath." It brings to the atmosphere an oxidation which is death to the germ of strife. Lincoln had in his large and generous personality such a faculty, without which his best work would have remained undone. "Do you know," asks an irate partisan, bursting in on him, "that the Secretary of War called you a blamed fool?" "Well," comes the unruffled answer, "Stanton is generally right." Such a spirit is like opening a door in a close room and allowing a cool breeze to sweep through. It enables a stifled self-control and judgment to breathe anew.

For how truly great a genius is another role, that of comforter in sorrow, cast! Rarely does the word sent out in direct treatment ever come within sight of its mark. Our most sincere word often "thrusts a bungling hand amid the heartstrings of a friend." The offering of the truest philosophy and citation of Scripture leave the air still close. The error we often make is to assume that we can by any effort

heal the wound directly. God and his great almoner Time alone can do that. But to be present with a quiet and steady affection which takes itself for granted is to pass the heavy atmosphere weighing down on our friend through the medium of a sympathetic friendship, and so give it new life.

But the most frequent contribution which we can make to the air which others breathe is that which fills it with the oxygen of incentive. How quickly one transported from the East Side of New York responds to the pines of the Adirondacks. The great danger which the newcomer to Colorado runs is that he will work himself beyond his strength in a few weeks. There is an exhilaration in the air which makes for work—a freshness and a zest, from which all germs of “the sleeping sickness” have been effectually sponged out. It has the same effect which a high and resolute attitude to life carries with it wherever it appears. “Beauty and rhythm,” says Plato, in a noble apology for art, “find their way into the secret places of the soul.” So does every kind of noble activity tend to create its reproduction, not as a mechanical replica but as a native growth.

In the first story published by the late O. Henry there is a young shop girl who keeps a picture of Lord Kitchener on her table, not having the least idea who he was, because he had a "stern face." It was stern enough, at any rate, to tide her over, by implied disapproval, the temptation of the one night with which the author's sobering story concerns itself. It is not overdrawn. The fine and noble face of Frederick W. Robertson has hung over the desk of more than one man, through the months and years, washing the air clean of low aims and mean desires.

One thing about this device merits attention. It is a *power* plant. It calls for fuel, energy, sacrifice. Purifying air concerns itself with such concrete things as coal, steam, dynamos. It is never passive. This indirect method of service is not, therefore, easy. It must be, not the sporadic effort of an hour but the massed impression of a life. That which sustains life comes from a life which is itself a sustained effort.

XXXIV

“AT YOUR PERIL!”

“WE get our bread at the peril of our lives,” ran the testimony of the author of the book of Lamentations, vividly picturing the uncertainties of life in the conquered and desolate Jerusalem. We may well render thanks that the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places where we can win a livelihood without the risk of life itself. Render thanks, that is, if in doing so we do not forget that we have still a long way to go in reducing the physical peril of life. Nor need we go to Europe for examples. There are too many thousand preventable accidents in our own land that still make timely the bitter cry of Thomas Hood, fifty years ago:

O God, that bread should be so dear
And flesh and blood so cheap!

A brilliant inventor has given this testimony: “If I can produce a device to save time, I can dispose of it in twenty places; but if I offer an idea for saving life, I can hardly dispose

of it at all.” Time is money, but a man is easily replaced.

Yet no matter how safe industry and travel may become in the future years, the old word of Lamentations will always be true of the spiritual life. We will always get our bread at the risk of having the process deaden our spiritual aspiration and hunger. On the gates at the entrance to every occupation and profession, there is written “At Your Peril!” To say that is not to chant a wail over work. Without labor the finest faculties of the soul would sicken and droop. Yet, with all the benefits which follow the concentrated pursuit of an occupation, it holds perils as real as did the forests where our ancestors hunted game for food.

In the mere fact of routine, so large a part of our daily toil, there lies the constant menace to the mind and heart of life becoming an uninspiring drag. Constantly thinking and working in any groove holds the danger of blunting the sensibilities to all that lies outside of that groove. “Tell me about Spain, romantic Spain,” asked a friend of an automobile tourist. “Well,” he replied, “down in the valleys the roads are pretty good, but up

in the hill they are awful." Spain meant nothing but roads to him. With his eyes glued to the ruts, he missed entirely the face of the fields and the face of man. "Born a man, died a grocer," is often a true epitaph. Nor does the mere kind of routine make very much difference. Even so glorious a thing as preaching may be allowed to become an unspiritual drag. The tendency is to strike a level and strike it so low as to leave out all high aspirations and endeavors.

There is the lifelong peril of the means becoming the end. Like the dyer's hand the mind becomes subdued to what it works in, and the final purpose of life is forgotten in the process of sustaining and furnishing it. The number of things lost in a large city in the course of a year is amazing. The London police office handles over one hundred thousand lost articles every year. But what a much more appalling tale would be the story of those finer lost things which are never reported and often not even detected—ideals slipped away, purposes pared down, and aims beclouded! When the means becomes the end the world becomes a landscape without a sky.

Let him who thinks he has escaped in his

money-getting the peril of covetousness and avarice thank God; then let him hasten to take heed lest he fall. There is much food for thought in the statement of a priest that he had every conceivable fault confessed to him except one—that of penury and stinginess. A great artist has given on canvas his conception of avarice as having the forepart of the body like a dragon and the rear part like a shapeless iceberg. It is his portrayal of the truth that the approach of avarice freezes every fine enthusiasm and generous movement of the heart. Other vices spoil different aspects of life; this one chills it at the center.

Against these perils which do not appear on Saint Paul's notable list—perils of the counter, perils of the office, perils of the street—there is only one remedy, a very hard and heroic one: “Watch and pray.” Thread your routine with the nobler quest of the Kingdom, supplement the contacts of the market place with the companionship of the King, and you will go unscathed by the Pestilence that walketh at noonday.

XXXV

EVERYTHING UPSIDE DOWN

IN the aisle of a large department store the week before Christmas, a lady who looked like an animated Christmas tree, with packages dangling from each arm, and a gentleman who was looking the other way, were demonstrating to the complete satisfaction of the on-lookers the incontestable theorem that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time. There was a disastrous collision and the packages flew in four directions. As the man stooped to pick up the packages, the woman gave relief to her feelings: "O, I hate Christmas, anyhow! It turns everything upside down!" It was on the tip of the man's tongue to say, "Why, that is just what it is made for," but there was a weather signal in the look in her eye which told him that the hour was not propitious for such philosophizing, so he lifted his hat and passed on. But he always felt grateful to her for the deep though unconscious wisdom of her remark.

There is far-reaching appropriateness in the fact that the world's immortal baby story, that of Bethlehem, should be a story of turning things upside down—for that is a baby's chief business. It is a gross slander on babies that their chief passion is food. It is rearrangement. Every orthodox baby rearranges all that he sees, from the order of importance in the family to the bric-a-brac and window curtains. The advent of every baby completely upsets his little world, both physically and spiritually. And it is not one of the smallest values of the fact that the Saviour of the world came into it as a baby, that it reminds men that every baby is born a savior, to some extent, from selfishness and greed and sin in the little circle which his advent blesses.

Christmas turns everything upside down. This is the central truth of the incarnation—"Immanuel, God with us." The upside of heaven come down to earth. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, . . . full of grace and truth." Men miss the entire meaning of Jesus when they see in him the highest upreach of man; he is God reaching down and making common cause with man's struggle. The meaning of

Christmas puts down the mighty things in men's minds from their seats—place, riches, talents—and exalts the things of low degree—humility, simplicity, and trust. Charles Lamb, in one of his most delightful essays, sets high worth on the observance of All Fools' Day, because it says to a man: "You look wise. Pray correct that error!" Christmas brings the universal message to men: "You look important and great; pray correct that error." It overturns the false standards that have blinded the vision and sets up again in their rightful magnitude those childlike qualities by which we enter the Kingdom.

Christmas turns things inside out. Under the spell of the Christmas story the locked up treasures of kindness and sympathy come from the inside of the heart, where they are often kept imprisoned, to the outside of actual expression in deed and word. We read of the visit of the Wise Men, that when they saw the Child they unlocked the chest and took out their gifts. It is the vision of the Christ-child which enables all men to get at the best treasures of their lives and offer them for use.

Christmas turns things last end foremost. The people whom the world arranges last in

its procession—the weary, the poor, the foolish, the lame, the halt, the blind—these are the ones who come at the very head of the column in the consideration of the Little Child who leads. The last, the least, the lost—how often those words were on Jesus's lips—the three great objects of his passion! It is not the world's idea of correct form. Here is the order of seating on an old New England Church, as preserved in its records: "First, dignity of descent; second, place of public trust; third, pious disposition; fourth, estate; last (and least no doubt!) peculiar serviceableness of any kind." What a commentary on the New Testament! And yet most of us unconsciously arrange our acquaintances or possible acquaintances in the order of what advantage they may be to us. Jesus reverses the whole scheme as a perversion and sets up a new basis of classification. His question is not, What can this man do for me? but What can I do for him? The most important person for us to know, he tells us both by word and example, is the one who needs us most. "The first shall be last and the last shall be first."

XXXVI

GETTING ALL RUN DOWN

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's
breast;
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another
crest.

IN the spring also the barns along the country roadside begin to burgeon with large and gaudily painted enticements to buy Jones' Sarsaparilla or Smith's Elixir of Life for "that run-down feeling." They are worded so alluringly that if we had not noticed the symptoms before, we are almost persuaded when we finish that we are pretty much "run down."

"Getting all run down" seems to be quite popular, particularly among those classes which can afford it. Nervous exhaustion in all its various forms has appeared so often that it has been deemed worthy of a name all of its own—"Americanitis." It is usually a partial product of that ubiquitous and iniquitous trinity, hurry, worry, and jar. And for a

long time it had elevated the Spring Tonic into the dignity and proportion of a national movement. But as a nation we are fortunately getting over the drug habit. The advertisement is no longer our chief guide, philosopher, and friend in matters of health. We have listened to wiser advice and are learning that to cure a disease calls for far different remedies than merely to stifle its symptoms. Not many ills are cured from bottles, and in nervous exhaustion particularly, the final reliance is on rest, food, and change.

Getting all run down is serious business and frequently wins too little sympathy from those who are entire strangers to overtaxed nerves. In a large number of cases, however, and perhaps to some extent in most, the physical exhaustion is only the easily noticed foreground, of which the equally important background which must be taken into account is spiritual depletion. Where there is little or no reserve of spiritual life and strength one is much more liable to get run down in spirits and consequently in physical stamina. The exertion which a healthy man does not notice drains heavily when the reserve fund is low. Many a wise physician meets cases where the funda-

mental need is not a few teaspoonfuls of any prescription so much as it is a new grip on life and a new outlook that will come only through prayer and a new sense of God. Many a physician not so wise keeps doctoring in the dark for ills that have one real root at least in spiritual bankruptcy. The process of getting toned up often depends on the ability to recover a conquering and confident mood, and a lost mood is one of the hardest things on earth to find. When Carlyle had lost, through the carelessness of Mill's servant, his only manuscript of the French Revolution, his wife tried to comfort him by telling him he could write it again. "I can get the facts again," he said, "but how shall I recover the glorious mood in which it was struck off at white heat?"

This recovery of a glorious mood is only possible by bringing ourselves freshly under the conditions which first caused it. And for all cases of lost spirits the most important element of restoration is the quickening at the center of the sense and presence of God. "He restoreth my soul." A contractor was asked why a certain group of houses collapsed. He replied that the workmen took the scaffolding down before they put the wallpaper up. The

construction of some lives is equally thin. To have a vigorous and real spiritual life at the center is our greatest need for every point on the circumference.

Another frequent cause of getting run down in spirits is the fact that when our time is all frittered away in unimportant pursuits it easily begins to drag. Some one asked an attendant at a large German sanitarium what the guests did in rainy weather. "O," he answered, "they just annoy themselves." It describes very well the result of many fussy activities even when the skies are clear. They "annoy" themselves, and the annoyance, sustained by no high motives and bringing no bracing returns, wears on the nerves. It was a vastly different answer which the keeper of the lighthouse on Long Island gave to the question as to whether he got lonesome. "Not since I saved my man," he said with a gleam in his eye. The joy which is real re-creation is the joy of service, to which Miss Sullivan, the teacher of Helen Keller, has given such fine expression in one of her letters: "My heart is singing for joy this morning. The light of understanding has shown on my little pupil's mind and, behold, all things are new!"

Every one who lives earnestly must expect fatigue. We must use whatever means we can to restore the wearing down—rest, fresh air, and change. There is room even for the right “spring tonic.” But behind all these things is something finer and surer. “Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.”

XXXVII

"SPLENDID FAILURES"

MR. HARRY GRAHAM has gone to a strange and unfrequented field for material for a very suggestive book which he calls *Splendid Failures*. Under this title he groups a number of men of great endowment and wonderful promise who never achieved any results at all commensurate with their talents or public expectation. They plucked victory by the sleeve, but were not able to hold her, and their moments of success have been quite forgotten because of their ultimate failure. While the author does not add the role of moralist to that of biographer, some of his studies are so extremely instructive that he who runs may read their teaching in the simple and unadorned recital. The stories of three men in particular are thought-provoking to a degree, and are well worthy of a place in our remembrance.

"The Cockney Raphael." This is the title given to Benjamin Robert Haydon, a name unknown to modern ears, but who, on his advent

in London in the early part of the nineteenth century, was greeted as one of the greatest painters of centuries. His first painting was warmly welcomed by the Academy and sold for one hundred guineas. In rapid succession he produced large historical paintings which were acclaimed by Hazlitt, no incompetent critic, as the finest works of art since the days of Titian. Wordsworth said of his "Christ Entering Jerusalem" that it was worth waiting half a century to complete. When it was exhibited the whole of Piccadilly was blocked by the carriages of those who wished to see it. Leigh Hunt said of one of his works that "it was a bit of embodied lightning." Walter Scott paid him a flattering tribute: "When all the figures in the picture get up and walk away I want the little girl in the foreground." Haydon was the possessor of abundant and undoubted talent and to it he added the virtues of unslackening industry; several times he nearly blinded himself with overwork.

Even in the world of art to-day the name of Haydon means nothing. The crossed threads of many misfortunes run through his career, but his inclusion in a list of "splendid failures" is due most of all to two causes of

many a failure, splendid and otherwise—pride and envy. The early and enthusiastic recognition turned Haydon's pride, already great enough, into assurance of colossal proportions. "What Homer dared, I'll dare," he cries. "Genius was sent into the world, not to obey laws, but to give them." "Give me the dome of Saint Paul's," he exclaimed when told that his canvases were too large. To this blinding pride was coupled the destructive force of envy. In long series of bitter letters he heaped satire and abuse on rivals and critics, and lived to see the early popularity turn into neglect and caricature and found himself friendless and bankrupt. The fair promise of early years was turned into a tragic struggle with debt and disappointment, to which suicide finally put an end.

"*A Shooting Star.*" This was the characterization given by Lord Rosebery to Charles Townshend, who held at different times in the latter half of the eighteenth century nearly every post in the British Cabinet. He was Pitt's only rival in the admiration of the House of Commons and was confidently expected to leave as immortal a name in history as Pitt's. Great indeed must have been the

talents which could have won from Macaulay the tribute, "the most versatile of mankind." Hume admitted him "the cleverest fellow in England." Burke said, "Never in this or in any other century did there arise a man of more pointed and polished wit, or, where his passions were not concerned, of more refined, exquisite, or penetrating judgment."

Why should it be necessary to explain at length just who so marvelous a prodigy was? Surely, here is equipment enough for one of the "few, the immortal names that are not born to die"! With Townshend it was nothing more complex than an entire lack of fixed principle which might bring to some lasting fruition his prodigal endowment. His only principle was the career open to talents. He would have agreed with the maxim of Talleyrand that unselfish devotion to a principle or a party imperiled a man's chances of success. Let the immortality of Pitt and the nameless obscurity of Townshend speak as to the truth of Talleyrand's cynicism! Townshend was never earnest, loyal to no one, and though he was hailed as the "greatest man of his age," lacking common truth and common sincerity, he is remembered only by a few historians as a man whose

disastrous policy helped to rend the British empire, and an orator of whose power nothing remains but the faint reflection of a rhetorical blaze.

“*Little Hartley,*” Hartley Coleridge, inherited much of the strange genius of his father, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. He was dubbed “the Philosopher” by Lamb when he was three years old. At nine he had written several tragedies, and at twelve was an accomplished Greek scholar. At twenty he was appointed a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. Surely, here was a fine sunrise! Yet before he could enter on his Fellowship those habits of dissipation which made him so soon a splendid failure had set in, and all the rest of his life was “bound in shallows and in miseries,” of a lack of self-control and mental concentration. He left some poetry, highly popular in its day, among which are some of the finest lyrics in the language—a faint gleam of what might have been. He died at the age of forty-seven, having been indulgently cared for by Wordsworth for many years. His biography might be well summed up in a single line of his own: “And still I am a child, tho’ I grow old.”

Splendid Failures are not good company as a steady thing. They are depressing. And yet they do for us one thing which is well worth having done at any price. They take away from some very familiar words all sense of the hackneyed and give them a startling and fresh application: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

XXXVIII

SWAN SONGS

IN that finest assertion of immortality to be found outside of the Scriptures, the deathless Phædo of Plato, Socrates speaks of the tradition of the swan singing before it dies. "For they, having sung all their lifelong, do then sing more than ever that they are about to go away to the God whose ministers they are. Men slanderously affirm that they sing a lament at the last. And I too, believing myself to be the consecrated servant of the same God and fellow-servant of the swans, would not go out of life less merrily than they."

So the great pre-Christian saint refuses to make his final song a lament but voices a pæan of affirmation. Following such a noble tradition some of the great seers of the race have left among their last utterances, their swan songs, part of the world's most priceless treasure. The records of these hours of supreme insight well repay our study.

One of the most imperishable pictures in all literature is that given us in Augustine's Confessions, where he and his mother, Monica,

just before her death, stand hand in hand, gazing out over the blue of the Mediterranean wondering just what the character of the eternal life will be, upon which she is so soon to enter. We cherish the picture because it expresses so perfectly a universal hope, love, and wonder. "With what body do they come?" The old question of Paul's day ever remains in human hearts.

Three of the most inspired singers of our own times have left for us in their later songs three different aspects of immortality which appealed most strongly to them as the end approached. In those three aspects of faith we find three characteristics of eternal life which make up the sum of all we need to know.

1. "*To meet my Pilot face to face.*" This is the legacy to the world left by Alfred Tennyson, a rational faith in a personal God, to whom the human soul has an eternal value. He has fought his doubts and those of his age for more than half a century. He has done valiant service for the faith. He is now at peace.

For tho' from out the bourne of Time and Space
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to meet my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the Bar.

He explained the Pilot to his son Hallam as "that Divine and Unseen who is always guiding us." The Pilot to Tennyson was no vague "stream of tendency which makes for righteousness"; no "Infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed." "Mind," he enjoined his son a few days before his death, "you put 'Crossing the Bar' at the end of all editions of my poems." It was his communication to the world that eternal life meant facing the living Pilot.

2. "*O thou soul of my soul.*" These are the words of one who never turned his back but marched breast forward, Robert Browning. They were written in his last years when the death of his wife was still, as it always remained, an unhealed hurt. His militant faith in immortality includes a personal God as surely as that of Tennyson, but his fresh sorrow leads him to think of death mainly as the reunion of a deathless human love:

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave.

The black moment's at end,

And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,

Shall dwindle, shall blend,

Shall change, shall become, first a peace out of pain,

Then a light, then thy breast,

O thou soul of my soul, I shall clasp thee again,

And with God be at rest.

Had Robert Browning never written a word of poetry, he would have left the world immeasurably in his debt by imparting what was almost a new sacredness to marriage. His fine and pure chivalry lifted human love into divinity. His faith in the eternal reunion of souls knit together on earth, as expressed in "Prospice," is a permanent part of the world's hope.

3. *"So the right word be said."* This is the voice of our own Whittier in one of his last songs, voicing an aspect of immortality sometimes forgotten. He does not forget the earth he is to leave, but takes his "freehold of thanksgiving" in the faith that the strivings of his life here will contribute to the onward march of his brothers after he is gone.

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,
Finish what I begin
And all I fail of win.

What matters, I or they
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said
And life the sweeter made?

Immortality of influence on earth will not of itself satisfy our eternal longing, but it is a

vital part of the deepest hope of every true soul. Being dead, to yet speak, and be a blessing to to-morrow as well as to to-day is a part of the power of an endless life.

How much better these assured aspects of immortality than the idle speculations with which the curious concern themselves, with their pre- and post-millenniums, their fantastic dates, their exact chartings of the streets of the New Jerusalem! For the glorious faith expressed in these supreme hours is among the things revealed which belong to us and to our children forever. The assurance of God, the permanence of personality, the onward sweep of the Kingdom on earth—these things do not minister to a restless curiosity; they are the sure girding of great souls in the thickest of the fight.

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